

New Latin Version Approved by Pope Pius XII

Psalms+

LATIN ENGLISH EDITION



Prayerbook of the Ancient Church

With Explanations and Reflections

74

with Foreword by

Rev. M. H. McClelland, S. J.



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THE PSALMS
IN LATIN AND ENGLISH
A PRAYERBOOK

WITH SUPPLEMENT:
THE CANTICLES OF THE
ROMAN BREVIARY

LIBER PSALMORUM

CUM CANTICIS
BREVIARII ROMANI

NOVA E TEXTIBUS PRIMIGENIIS
INTERPRETATIO LATINA
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THE PSALMS
A PRAYER BOOK
ALSO THE CANTICLES OF
THE ROMAN BREVIARY

NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATION
WITH ECCLESIASTICAL APPROBATION
INCLUDING
THE NEW LATIN VERSION FROM THE HEBREW

BY
THE PROFESSORS
OF THE PONTIFICAL BIBLICAL INSTITUTE

AUTHORIZED BY
POPE PIUS XII

ALSO CONTAINING PREFACE, EXPLANATORY
INTRODUCTIONS, VERSE SUMMARIES, REFLECTIONS,
COMMENTARIES AND TOPICAL GUIDES BY

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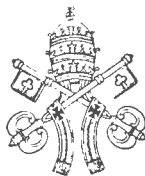


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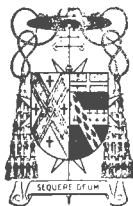
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APOSTOLIC LETTER
"In Cotidianis Precibus"

MOTU PROPRIO

THE NEW LATIN PSALTER AND ITS USE
IN THE DIVINE OFFICE

Following the example of her divine Redeemer and His apostles the Church has from her earliest beginnings made constant use of those illustrious songs which the holy prophet David and other sacred writers composed under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit. They occupy a place apart in the official prayer that priests recite each day in praise of God's goodness and majesty, for their own needs, and for those of the universal Church and of the entire world.

It should be remembered, however, that the Latin Church possesses these psalms as a heritage from a Church whose language was Greek. Originally translated almost word for word from Greek into Latin, they were in course of time given a number of careful corrections and revisions, most notably by the "Greatest Doctor" in the Sacred Scriptures, St. Jerome. But these corrections did not remove many of the obvious inaccuracies occurring already in the Greek version, inaccuracies which leave the force and meaning of the original [Hebrew] text quite obscure. As a result the generality of Latin readers still could not grasp with ease the sense of the sacred psalms.

And it is a well-known fact that St. Jerome himself was not satisfied with having offered the Roman world that ancient Latin translation, even in his own "most diligently corrected" edition. With even greater diligence therefore he set to work translating the psalms directly from "the Hebrew truth." However this latter translation of St. Jerome never came into general use in the Church. Instead his revised edition of the old Latin version, now known as the Gallican Psalter, gained such widespread popularity that finally Our sainted predecessor, Pius V, decided to include it in the Roman Breviary, thereby prescribing it for practically universal use.

Now in preparing this edition of the psalms St. Jerome had made no effort to eliminate its obscurities and inaccuracies; his sole purpose was to correct the Latin text in accordance with the better Greek manuscripts. In our day, however, these obscurities and inaccuracies are becoming ever more glaring. For recent times have witnessed remarkable progress in the mastery of oriental languages, particularly Hebrew, and in the art of translation. Scholarly research into the laws of meter and rhythm governing oriental poetry has advanced apace. The rules for what is called textual criticism are now seen in clearer light. In various countries, moreover, many excellent vernacular translations of the psalter were published with the Church's approval, translations based on the original texts. These publications have made increasingly apparent the exquisite clarity, the poetic beauty, the wealth of doctrine those hymns possess in their original tongue.

It is not at all surprising, then, that a good many priests began to hope for a new Latin version of the psalms for their daily use. The hope was a very praiseworthy one, springing as it did from their endeavor to recite the canonical Hours not only with sincere devotion but with fuller understanding as

well. What they desired was a Latin psalter that would bring out more clearly the meaning the Holy Spirit had inspired, that would give truer expression to the devout sentiments of the Psalmist's soul, that would reflect his style and his very words more exactly. This eager wish was voiced repeatedly both in books written by learned men of high repute and in various periodicals. The matter was furthermore referred to Us by not a few Ecclesiastics and Bishops and likewise by members of the Sacred College of Cardinals.

Now as We explained not so very long ago in the Encyclical Letter *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, We are in keeping with the profound reverence We cherish for the words of divine Writ, determined on this: no pains, no energy is to be spared in making it possible for the faithful to perceive ever more plainly the meaning of the Scriptures as intended by the Holy Spirit who inspired it and as expressed by the sacred writer. We fully appreciated, of course, what a difficult undertaking this would be. We realized too how intimately bound up the Latin Vulgate is with the writings and interpretations of the Holy Fathers and Doctors, how by its long centuries of use it has obtained in the Church the very highest authority.

Nevertheless We decided to comply with these devout wishes and gave orders that a new Latin translation of the psalms be provided. It was to follow the original texts, follow them exactly, faithfully. At the same time it was, as far as possible, to take into account the venerable Vulgate along with other ancient versions, and to apply sound critical norms where their readings differed. Not even the Hebrew text, as We are well aware, has reached us altogether free from error and obscurity. It needs to be compared with other texts that have come down to us from ancient times with a view to discovering which of them renders the sense more truly

and exactly. In fact there are times when, even after every help that text criticism and a knowledge of languages can offer has been exhausted, the meaning of the words is still not perfectly clear and their more definite clarification will have to be left to future study.

Still we are confident that today, thanks to the painstaking use made of all the latest findings, it has been possible to provide a translation of the psalms such as was desired. It presents their meaning and content clearly enough to enable priests reciting the Divine Office to grasp readily what the Holy Spirit intended to convey by the lips of the Psalmist; clearly enough, too, for them to be stirred up by the divine words and urged on to true and genuine piety.

Now that the professors of Our Pontifical Biblical Institute have completed the longed-for new translation with the diligence befitting such a task, We offer it with fatherly affection to all who have the obligation to recite the canonical Hours daily. After due consideration of all the issues involved, We hereby of Our own free choice (*motu proprio*) and upon mature deliberation permit them to use it, should they wish to do so, in either private or public recitation as soon as it has been adapted to the psalter of the Roman Breviary and published by the Vatican Printing Office.

We hope that this pastoral solicitude and fatherly affection of Ours for the men and women who have dedicated their life to God will prove helpful to them. May it assist them all to draw ever more light and grace and comfort from their Divine Office. May those benefits open their eyes in these days of bitter trial through which the Church is passing, and inspire them to conform their lives more and more to the examples of holiness that shine forth so radiantly in the psalms. Let them nourish and cultivate in their hearts those senti-

ments of divine love, vigorous courage and sincere repentance to which the Holy Spirit moves us as we read the sacred songs.

What We have decided and decreed by this *motu proprio* letter shall have the force of law, anything to the contrary notwithstanding, whatever it may be, even though worthy of very special mention.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's, on the 24th day of March in the year 1945, the 7th of Our Pontificate.

POPE PIUS XII

INDULGENCE

The faithful who spend at least a quarter of an hour in reading Holy Scripture with the great reverence due to the Word of God and after the manner of spiritual reading, may gain an indulgence of 300 days (S. C. Ind., December 13, 1898; S. P. Ap., March 22, 1932).

(From "The Raccolta" Official English Translation)

This English translation of "The Apostolic Letter" of Pope Pius XII is here reproduced from "Orate Fratres" for June 17 1945, with the permission of The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn.



Purpose of Psalms

Guidance in Our Praise and Prayer to God

Like every part of Holy Scripture, the Book of the Psalms has a twofold character, natural and supernatural.

By nature the Psalms are a collection of ancient hymns, since every Psalm is a poem composed in praise of God or in prayer to him. In keeping with the poetry of ancient Israel and kindred peoples, the Psalms are not written, like our own poems, in groups of lines having an equal number of syllables, but in pairs of sentences comparing two thoughts on the same subject. This Hebrew method of composing poetry is easily seen even in modern translations. Poems whose theme is God, either in himself or as the source of man's dependence, are naturally regarded as hymns, whether their words are directed to men in acknowledgment of God, or addressed to God on behalf of men. Thus, if David and the other psalmists had accomplished nothing more, they would at least have left us the noblest hymns of ancient Israel.

But the supernatural character of the Psalms gives them a value incomparably higher. Early Jewish authority, by including them in its sacred writings, acknowledged in them a worth surpassing that of ordinary wisdom and piety. More definitely

Translation of headband: Let my prayer, O Lord, be directed as incense in thy sight

the Catholic Church, acting as Christ's custodian of His full and final revelation, declared the Psalms to have been divinely inspired. When David and his fellow-psalmists left in writing their own devout aspirations, their minds were enlightened and their wills influenced to such action by an especial grace of God. Hence generations of their followers, chanting the Psalms in the Temple and in their synagogues, were praying as God had moved his people to pray. Indeed, in the fullness of time the Psalms attained their highest destiny by lending verbal form to the perfect praise and prayer of Christ himself. By the grace of inspiration, God the Holy Spirit had provided a treasury of devotion which the lips of the Incarnate Son, speaking as Man for all men, were to render to the Eternal Father.

Christianity has never lost sight of these truths. Second only to the solemn sacrifice of the Eucharist, the Psalms, as the essential element of the Breviary, hold (together with the scriptural Canticles) the place of highest honor in the Church's ministry of vocal prayer. Other hymns she has besides, but none other that were given her by God. Each of her priests, before beginning the daily recitation of the Breviary, thus addresses his Master: "Lord, in union with that divine intention with which Thou, on earth, didst render praise to God, I fulfill these Hours unto Thee."

In using the Psalter, however, the devout layman follows the clergy only at a distance. Often he has no English manual of the Psalms separate from the rest of the Old Testament. When this inconvenience is overcome, a worse impediment confronts him. Inspired words which convey no meaning to himself cannot satisfy his soul in prayer, unless they are uttered from a motive of obedience to the Church. Most of the laity, however, have no obligation to recite the Psalms from day to day; their use is quite optional. Lacking, in most cases, the special learning of the priest, the layman finds himself often puzzled by the language of the Psalms. Even those

few which happen to be most familiar to him do not wholly express his thoughts and desires, as does the Our Father. For every Psalm was first uttered by a mere mortal like ourselves, and sprang from the urging of his own experience. His disposition on some definite occasion called forth that utterance of praise or supplication, elevated though it was at the moment, by the Holy Spirit, to the dignity of a divine message to all mankind. When means and opportunity are at hand, the reading of learned commentaries may let us know, at least in part, the psalmist's own original thought, which we call the literal or historical meaning of his words. But all such reading advances us in the science of interpretation, not in the art of prayer. It only reminds us more keenly that the psalmist spoke to God out of his own mind and heart, and not in all particulars as a modern Christian would be moved to pray.

And yet, for reasons partly similar and partly different, this was equally true of Christ our Lord in his recitation of the Psalms. For instance, David's words of sorrow for sin could speak for nothing in the conscience of our sinless Redeemer. We, indeed, can borrow those words in all their force. But on the part of Christ, only some other intention—perhaps that of intercession for us, offered as if in our name—could give them sincerity as words of prayer. Furthermore, each psalmist's place in history and position in society, his personal needs, his particular trials and enemies, and his exact experience of divine protection, were not identically those of Christ, as neither are they ours. Our Lord could not verify the psalmist's situation as his own, and yet he could and did, when he worshipped in the Temple, adopt the psalmist's words to express his own sentiments of praise and prayer.

Nothing different in kind is expected of ourselves. It is enough that we accommodate the sacred language of the Psalms to our own personal needs, and express them through its medium. Our individual devotional sentiments are not suppressed, but

handed over, as it were, to the guidance of divine expression. Such a practice repays us by its education in praise and prayer. Growing familiarity with words of sacred origin as repeatedly applied to ourselves, gradually enriches and elevates our habitual ideas of praising God and praying to him more acceptably. With the constant aid of grace, such experience will in time prove to be its own reward.

All this, however, still supposes that the language of the Psalms should have a meaning which any of us can recognize and appropriate. The absence of all evident sense from even a brief expression here and there would be a partial interruption. Unfortunately, these passing shadows do occasionally halt us. On second thought, this is not strange. With the origin of the Psalms so remote from us in place and time, and with nearly thirty centuries of their public use intervening besides, we should rather be surprised if every sentence and phrase were clear to us at sight. Not that the Psalter has anywhere been seriously altered in meaning; nor have the many minor defects which research can now detect, been due to worse than merely accidental causes. The very zeal that passed on the Psalms from Hebrew to Greek, from Greek to Latin, and from Latin to our modern tongues, would have to pay some wayside toll to the universal difficulty of transferring thought from one medium of speech to another.

Grateful indeed for what we have, may we yet hope for something better? So the teachers of the Church have ventured to believe. With the passage of time and the growth of learning and opportunity, their vigilance over the Sacred Writings has never relaxed. As a consequence, the Holy See of Rome now wishes to bring us once more into closer touch with the original wording of the Psalms in Hebrew. A group of contemporary biblical scholars has recently been duly commissioned by Papal authority to recur to that original, so far as it can be ascertained, and from it to provide a more exact Latin version for the Catholic clergy throughout the

world and for all others who can profitably use it.

In their turn, the authorities of the Church in our own nation have addressed themselves without delay to the task of making this revised Latin version of the Psalms accessible to us all in English. Such is the source and character of the little volume which this note has the honor to accompany. With such an aid at their service it should henceforth be far easier for the faithful of Christ to bring the use of the Psalms within the compass of their own life of praise and prayer.

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The Psalms in Old Testament Worship and in the Mass

The Psalms—Their Origin

Outstanding events of Jewish history were often commemorated by poetry and song. We read in Deuteronomy 31, 19, that Moses was commanded by God to write a canticle in memory of the giving of the Law. Debbora and Barac sang a song to God for the victory over Jabin and Sisara, while Judith praised God with a canticle of thanksgiving for the death of Holofernes. And the canticles of the Blessed Virgin, Zachary and Simeon are well known to all of us.

Liturgical music seems to have begun with David; certainly before him we find no directions about the use of music and song in divine worship. He instructed the chiefs of the Levites to appoint some of their number to be singers with musical instruments, on psalteries and harps and cymbals, that the joyful strains might sound on high (1 Par. 15, 16). That this great king was particularly concerned about the praise of God in song and music is clear from the fact that in 2 Esdras 12, 44 it is stated that the music of the temple was renewed according to the command of David, and of Solomon his son.

The Psalter, often called Davidic because of the number of psalms that it contains written by the king, is a collection of sacred songs, of which many were composed to be used in the Liturgy. Even those, however, that were originally only the outpouring of religious sentiment were admirably adapted to such a purpose. This is evident from various passages in the Old Testament. We know from 1 Par. 16, 8 seq., that the Levites chanted parts of Pss. 104 and 95, ending with a proclamation of God's praise taken from Ps. 105, 1, and with an exhortation to ask for divine aid from Ps. 105, 47-48. And the people, accustomed to sing doxologies at the end of the psalms, answered "Amen," and praised the Lord.

XVI To glance a moment at the formation of the Psalter, we find in the book, hymns as well as prayer psalms of petition or of

thanksgiving. There are religious lyrics in which the psalmist pours out his soul to God in adoration, joy, or reverent reflection. There are liturgical psalms, adapted to the needs of Jewish feasts and services; as well as acrostic or alphabetical psalms, whose division is intended to aid the memory.

As regards their contents, we find nature psalms, which praise God's majesty and power in the physical world; and historical psalms, a warning or an inspiration drawn from Israel's history. There are didactic psalms with their moral teaching and religious counsel, and penitential psalms with their sentiments of sorrow and sin, such as the "Miserere" of David. We find imprecatory psalms, calling down curses upon the enemies of God; and finally the all-important Messianic psalms, telling of the sufferings and glorification of the Messias.

While we possess relatively few details on the use of the psalms in the religious ceremonies of Israel before the Exile, such texts as Is. 38, 20: "O Lord, save me and we will sing our psalms all the days of our life in the house of the Lord"; and Jer. 33, 11, indicate that even then they were generally employed in public worship.

The psalms were used, likewise, in the devotions of families and of individuals. Since the individual psalms present some of the most perfect types of prayer imaginable, the Jews in their devotions used them just as we do. For while the Psalter as a whole may owe its origin to the needs of the Sanctuary, yet it has always been and will ever remain an inexhaustible fountain of prayer for private as well as for public devotion. The Hallel (Pss. 112-117) was sung at the Paschal supper, half of it being chanted before and the rest after the meal. On the Feast of Tabernacles, as well as at the Pasch, the Hallel was sung by all Jews, and it is interesting to note that the acclamations of the people at Christ's entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday were taken from Ps. 117.

At the time of the Second Temple various psalms were assigned to the days of the week and to particular feasts. It is clear from their titles that some psalms had definite liturgical purposes. Ps. 23, for instance, was to be chanted during the offering of the morning holocaust on the first day of the week, which is our Sunday; and Pss. 91 and 37 filled the same purpose on the Sabbath. Ps. 80 was assigned to the morning of the New Year feast, and Ps. 28 to the afternoon.

Nor was the chanting of psalms missing in the synagogue service. The Talmud gives us this information, going so far as to note what psalms were sung on different days. On the feast of Purim or Lots, held to commemorate the frustration of the murderous plan of Aman by Queen Esther and her kinsman Mardocheus, Ps. 7 was sung by the people. At the Jewish feast of Pentecost, celebrated in thanksgiving for the harvest, Ps. 28 was chanted. On the feast of the Dedication of the Temple, in memory of the purification of the holy spot from the idolatrous worship of the Syrians and its rededica-

tion by Judas Machabaeus, the worshipers gave voice to their sentiments of joy and thanks in the words of Ps. 29. It is probable that the psalms were not recited unbrokenly in the worship of the synagogue; but as each verse was chanted, the people responded with an expression of praise to God, as we see in Ps. 135 "for his mercy endures forever."

The Psalms As Used by Christ

Our Lord frequently employed the psalms in His discourses and prayers. In giving the Beatitudes He referred to Ps. 36, 11: "But the meek shall possess the land, and shall delight in abundance of peace." In speaking to the multitudes at the beginning of Holy Week the Saviour exclaimed against the chief priests and the Pharisees: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner" (Ps. 117, 22). And not long after, the Lord asked the Pharisees how they could say that Christ was David's son since the prophet in spirit had called Him Lord, saying: "The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool'" (Ps. 109, 1).

Jesus recited Ps. 21 as He hung on the Cross, and His very last word was from Ps. 30, 6: "Into thy hands I commend my spirit."

The apostles, imitating our Lord, constantly used the psalm in their preaching and prayers. And rightly so, for their prophetic wealth is remarkable, just as their dogmatic and moral richness is astonishing. St. James in his epistle (5, 13) exhorts his readers to make use of the Psalter: "Is any of you sad? Let him pray. Is any one in good spirits? Let him sing a hymn." Peter, asked by the high priest by what power he had cured the lame man, exclaimed, using Ps. 117, 22, that it was through "the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the corner stone" (Acts 4, 11). Paul and Silas "praying, sang the praises of God" with psalms, when at midnight there was a great earthquake, and the foundations of their prison were shaken (Acts 16, 25). And Paul in his first epistle to his converts in Corinth (14, 26) reminds them: "What then is to be done, brethren? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, has an instruction, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edification."

The earliest liturgical service was taken from the Psalter. In the days of the infant Church the chanting of psalms played no small part in the meetings of the faithful. St. Paul represents the Ephesian Christians as making melody with one choir answering the other: "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father"

... (5, 19-20). There is probably a reference here to the Agape, XVIII the meal that was eaten by the early Christians in common

before the celebration of Mass. This was in memory of the Passover meal that was eaten by our Lord and the apostles before the celebration of the first Mass. And there is a like reference in Colossians 3, 16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly: in all wisdom teach and admonish one another by psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing in your hearts to God by his grace."

Nothing was more natural since the apostles and those early Christians who had come from Judaism had been accustomed to this kind of prayer. Besides, the Psalter is not specifically Jewish. Its songs of praise and supplication suited the new Christian religion better than the religion of the Old Covenant. And as Christianity gradually became organized, it made extensive use of the psalms.

It is but natural, therefore, that the psalms should be found in the Mass. Our Lord celebrated the first Mass after the Paschal supper on the night before He died. Since Pss. 113, 9 to 117 were recited at the end of this meal, they were closely connected with the first Mass. But, over and above that consideration, the psalms are expressions of joy, sorrow, hope, desire, fear, gratitude, and contrition, all of which sentiments find expression in the august Sacrifice.

The Psalms in the Mass

The Introit

The prayers said by the priest at the foot of the altar, including Ps. 42, "Judge me, O God," were formerly a private preparation for Mass made by the celebrant before he approached the altar. They express the priest's trust in God and his unworthiness. When the Missal was revised by Pope Pius V in 1570, these prayers became a recognized part of the Mass.

Ps. 42 was used as a preparation for the altar in the Old Testament. It was composed by King David after he had sinned and during the rebellion of his son Absalom. Surrounded by enemies, and repentant for his offenses, David appeals to God, from whom alone he can obtain strength. Through the words of this psalm the priest of the New Testament pleads with God for deliverance from his spiritual enemies.

The Introit, or "entrance" to the Mass, was originally a processional psalm chanted as the celebrant and his attendants entered the sanctuary. When the chanting fell into disuse, the first verse alone was retained and became a part of the Mass. The Introit consists nearly always of a passage from Holy Scripture with a verse of a psalm and the Gloria Patri, after which the introductory passage is repeated.

The Introit gives the key to the Mass, and the character of the august Sacrifice is known from it. Thus the Mysteries of Christ that are celebrated in the course of the Liturgical Year form the subject of the Introits for the respective feasts of our Lord, as for example, in the Midnight Mass on Christmas v. 7

of Ps. 2 is given: "The Lord has said to me: Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee." In the Mass for Palm Sunday the Church selects vv. 20 and 22 of Ps. 21, to depict the Passion of Christ: "But thou, O Lord, be not far from me: thou who art my strength, make haste to help me" and "Save me from the lion's mouth, save me, wretched that I am, from the horns of the wild oxen."

Every feeling of the human heart finds its expression in the Introit, whether joy or sorrow, hope or fear, gratitude or contrition. To take an example or two: In Masses for the Dead, the Introit begins, "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them." Then from Ps. 64 are added the words, "To Thee is due a song of praise, O God, in Sion and to Thee, who hearest prayers, a vow shall be paid. All flesh comes unto Thee because of iniquities" (vv. 2-3). On the Fourth Sunday of Lent the first word of the Introit "Laetare" gives its name to the day, for the Church "rejoices" since Easter is approaching. In this Introit we find the first verse of Ps. 121: "I rejoiced, because they said to me: We shall go into the house of the Lord."

It might be noted that in the special Masses for Saints there are Introits which indicate their characteristic virtues. Thus on the feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist August 29, we read in the Introit an excerpt from Ps. 118: "And I shall speak of thy precepts in the presence of kings, and shall not be ashamed. And I shall delight in thy commands, which I love" (v. 46). It is to be remembered that John's opposition to the actions of Herod was the occasion of his death.

The Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, and Sequence

Between the Epistle and the Gospel there are short readings which vary according to the day and season of the year. They are the Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, and Sequence. Originally they were psalms, chanted as part of the divine service. Gradually they were shortened in most cases to a few verses.

The Gradual takes its name from "gradus" meaning a "step," because it was formerly sung as the deacon ascended the steps of a platform called the ambo, half-way down the church, to sing the Gospel. It usually follows the character of the epistle, to which it is really a kind of response. While it is sometimes the Church's own composition and not taken from Scripture, it is usually interspersed with one or more verses of the psalms. In the second Mass for Christmas the Gradual is taken from Ps. 117: "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord: the Lord is God, and he has shone upon us. This is the Lord's doing; it is wonderful in our eyes." This Gradual follows an excerpt from the epistle of Paul to Titus (3, 4-7), in which the apostle speaks of the appearance of the goodness and kindness of God, our Saviour.

XX On the first Sunday of Advent we find the Gradual in the

words of Ps. 24: "For none that hopes in thee shall be confounded" (v. 3); and from Ps. 84: "Show us, O Lord, thy mercy, and grant us thy salvation" (v. 8).

As a rule the Gradual is accompanied with two or more Alleluias as an expression of the joy which the Church feels in the truths commemorated in it.

From Septuagesima until Easter, and on all ferial or weekdays as such, the Church omits the Alleluias and substitutes what is known as the Tract, derived from "tractim," and originally meaning something sung without break or interruption of other voices as in responses. The Tract is usually taken from Scripture, and very often from the Psalms. The Tract is of a mournful character, and in tone it resembles the Gradual. Thus in the votive Mass for the Sick after Septuagesima we find vv. 10-11 of Ps. 30 quoted as the Tract: "Have pity on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: Mine eye wastes away with grief, my soul and my body. For my life is consumed with suffering, and my years with groaning. My strength has failed in affliction, and my bones have grown weak."

At certain great seasons a hymn of joy is introduced between the epistle and the Gospel, called the Sequence, and sometimes the Prose because of the irregularity of its metre. Such are the hymns "Victimæ paschali" at Easter, the "Veni, Sancte Spiritus" at Pentecost, the "Lauda Sion" on Corpus Christi, the "Stabat Mater" and the "Dies Irae." The last two are exceptions to the others in being hymns of mourning. Sentiments from the psalms are to be found in all of these hymns.

The Offertory

After the Creed or, if it be not said, at the end of the Gospel, the priest addresses the congregation with the words "Dominus vobiscum." Then he reads the Offertory, prefacing it by the invitation "Oramus." The Offertory is an antiphon: it was once a psalm or collection of psalms, sung while the faithful made their offerings of bread and wine for the Mass, or of gifts for the clergy. These offerings fell into disuse about the eleventh century, but the Offertory and its name are still retained.

In many other rites the Offertory is placed at the beginning of Mass, but the Roman liturgy has always placed it after the Gospel.

The Offertory is usually taken from the psalms, and, like the Introit, bears upon the subject of the day. On the feast of the Ascension, for instance, the Offertory contains the words of Ps. 46, 6: "God has gone up amid shouts of joy, the Lord with the sound of the trumpet." In the Mass for a Virgin we find Ps. 44, 15: "After her, the young maidens, her companions, are brought to thee." When Mass is said for the Anniversary of the Election or Consecration of a Bishop, Ps. 88, 25 is given as the Offertory: "My faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him, and in my name shall his horn be lifted up."

The Lavabo

In all the various rites which the Church uses throughout the world the priest washes his hands. In the Roman rite after having offered the chalice he moves to the side of the altar, and washes the tips of his thumbs and forefingers, which were consecrated for the offering of the adorable Sacrifice, and he recites a portion of the twenty-fifth psalm. This psalm is David's prayer to be delivered from exile so that he may worship God in His Tabernacle. In the first verse which the priest recites (v. 6 of the psalm): "I wash my hands in innocence, and I walk around thine altar, O Lord," David refers to a certain Jewish custom. Before the Chosen People entered the Tabernacle or Temple they purified themselves and the victims about to be offered. The symbolism of this washing reminds the priest of the purity required in those who come to God's altar. The ends of the fingers, and not the hands, are washed, to express that the priest should be "clean wholly" (John 14, 10).

The Communion

The Communion is a short anthem or verse so called because it is said or sung immediately after the Communion of the faithful. Formerly it was chanted while the people communicated; and like the Offertory it is the remnant of a much longer psalm. From the twelfth century on, hymns were sung after the Communion, and they became a part of the priest's thanksgiving. In process of time these hymns and psalms were shortened to a single verse, which still keeps the name of "Communion," thus indicating its origin and use.

The verse in the Communion is generally taken from the Bible, and frequently from the Psalms. Sometimes, however, it is composed by the Church. An example of the latter may be found on the Feast of the Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin. Like other variable parts of the Mass, the Communion has a bearing on the feast or on the ecclesiastical season.

To cite a few examples of Communions that are taken from the Psalms, on Wednesday in Holy Week some phases of the Passion of Christ are indicated by excerpts from vv. 10-13 and by v. 14 of Ps. 101: "I mingle my drink with weeping: for thou hast lifted me up: and I wither like grass: but thou, O Lord, abidest forever: do thou rise up and be merciful to Sion, for it is time for thee to have pity on her." On the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist we find an excerpt from Ps. 20: "A crown of fine gold thou hast placed on his head" (v. 4). On the feast of Sts. Nereus, Achilleus, Domitilla, and Pancras, Martyrs, we find Ps. 32, 1 as the Communion: "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye just: praise becomes the upright." And on Ash Wednesday the antiphon is taken from Ps. 1, vv. 2-3: "He who shall meditate upon the law of the Lord day and night, shall bring forth his fruit in due season."

As St. Athanasius has said, in the Psalms you will find an accurate survey of the whole life of man, of the disposition of the soul, and of the movements of the mind. If a man has need of penitence and confession, if affliction or temptation has overtaken him, if he has been persecuted or has been delivered from the plots of his enemies, if he is in sorrow or trouble, or if he wishes to praise and give thanks and bless the Lord, he will find instruction in the Psalms.

That is why we find these poems in the Mass. For in the words of St. Augustine the Psalms are "luminous with the light of God."

VERY REV. JOHN F. ROWAN, D.D., L.S.S.

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PSALM 1

Psalm

True Happiness

1

Happiness of Holiness

The happiness of the just man as contrasted with the misery of the wicked. In obeying the law of God he shall prosper, while the way of the wicked will end in punishment and ruin.

The enduring prosperity of the just:

<p>Beátus vir, qui non séquitur * consílium impiórum, Et viam peccatórum non ingréditur, * et in convéntu protervórum non sedet; Sed in lege Dómini vo- lúptas ejus est, * et de lege ejus meditátur die ac nocte. Et est tamquam arbor * plantáta juxta rivos aquárum, Quæ fructum præbet témpace suo, cujúsque fólia non marcéscunt, * et quacúmque facit, pró- spere procédunt.—</p>	<p>B</p>	<p>lows not the counsel of the ungodly, And enters not into the way of sinners, and sits not in the company of the in- solent; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he ponders day and night. And he is like a tree plant- ed by running waters, That yields its fruit in due season, and whose leaves wither not, and whatsoever he does, prospers.</p>
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The speedy ruin of the wicked:

<p>Non sic ímpii, non sic; * sed tamquam pálea, quam díssipat ventus. Ideo non consistent ím- pii in iudício, * neque peccatóres in concílio justórum. Quóniam Dóminus cu- rat viam justórum, * et via impiórum peribit.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Not so the wicked, not so; but they are like chaff, which the wind scatters. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judg- ment, nor sinners in the gathering of the just. For the Lord has care for the way of the just, and the way of sinners shall perish.</p>
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Psalms

Commentary

2 **H**appy the man who does not follow the ways of the wicked, but rather keeps God's law before him day and night. He is as constantly fruitful in doing good as the tree growing by a perennial stream.

4-6: But the wicked are dispersed like chaff before the wind. The just, and not the wicked, will ultimately triumph through the omniscient justice of God.

Reflection

Man can find true happiness only in union with God through the faithful observance of his Law. Such a happiness is unknown to the sinner, who suffers from the scourges of sin, even in this life; while the tranquil conscience of the just man gives him a peace that includes the hope of a blessed eternity.

PSALM 2

The Messianic Kingship

For Grace to Submit to Christ

The Messiah, the eternal Son of God, King of Zion and of the whole world. The futile efforts of earthly kingdoms against Christ and his Church.

The nations try in vain to revolt against God and his anointed:

1 **Q**uare tumultuántur gentes * et pópuli medítántur inánia? **W**hy are the nations in tumult, and why do the peoples devise vain things?

2 **C**onsúrgunt reges terræ et príncipes conspirant simul * advérsus Dóminum et advérsus Christum ejus: **T**he kings of the earth rise up, and the princes take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed:

3 **"D**irumpámus víncula eórum * et projiciámus a nobis láqueos eórum!"— **"L**et us break their chains asunder, and let us cast away from us their bonds."

God regards with contempt the futile efforts of his foes:

2 **Q**ui hábitat in cælis, ri— **H**e who dwells in the heav-

det, * Dóminus illúdit eis. ens laughs, the Lord laughs them to scorn. *Psalm*

2

5 Tum lóquitur ad eos in ira sua, * et in furóre suo contúrbat eos: Then in his anger he speaks to them, and in his fury he dismays them:

6 "At ego constitui regem meum * super Sion, montem sanctum meum!"—"But I have established my king upon Sion, my holy mountain."

The Messiah proclaims his eternal generation and the universality of his reign:

7 Promulgábo decrétum Dómini: Dóminus dixit ad me: * "Fílius meus es tu, ego hódie génui te. I will make known the decree of the Lord: the Lord has said to me: "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.

8 Póstula a me et dabo tibi gentes in hereditátem * et in possessionem tuam téminos terræ. Ask of me and I will give thee the gentiles for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth as thy possession.

9 Reges cas virga férrea, * tamquam vas fíguli confringes eas."— Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, thou shalt break them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

The psalmist exhorts the nations to be subject to Christ, and thus avoid their own ruin:

10 Et nunc, reges, intelligite; * erudímini, qui gubernátis terram. And now, O kings, understand; be instructed, you that rule the world.

11 Servíte Dómino in timóre et exsultáte ei; * cum tremóre 12 præstáte obséquium illi, Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in him; with trembling offer homage to him,

Ne irascátur et pereátis de via, cum cito exárserit ira ejus: * beáti omnes qui confúgiunt ad eum. Lest he be angry and you perish from the way, for swiftly would his wrath be kindled. Blessed are all they who flee to him for refuge.

3 **T**he nations of the earth and their rulers plot rebellion against the Lord and His Messias.

4-6: God scoffs at their plans from heaven and warns them that his Messias is a divinely appointed King.

7-9: This King is God's own Son and has divine right over all the earth, and will shatter all opposition.

10-12: Hence the rebellious are warned to submit at once if they would be happy on the day of the Lord's anger. Submission is the idea underlying the Hebrew expression, "Kiss the son," in verse 12, as well as the Vulgate expression, "Embrace discipline," or the translation of St. Jerome from the Hebrew, "Adore in purity."

Reflection

As Christ obtained victory over the kings of the earth who took counsel together against him, so the Church will prevail over all her enemies. May God, who turned to derision those who rose up against Christ, give us the grace never to yield to adversities! Then the unbelief of those who know not God will be confounded, and the faith of those who cling to him will be crowned.

PSALM 3

Salvation in the Lord

To Obtain God's Protection

Although faint-hearted friends were telling him that it was useless to look for further help from God, the king's confidence remains unshaken.

The title of the psalm:

- ¹ Psalmus. Davidis, cum fugit a filio suo Absalom. A psalm of David. When he fled from Absalom, his son.

David's present distress:

- ² **D**ómine, quam multi **H**ow many, O Lord, are sunt qui tribulant **H** they that afflict me, me, * multi insúrgunt many rise up against me, advérsus me!

- ³ Multi sunt qui de me Many are they that say of dicunt: * "Non est salus me: "There is no salvation ei in Deo." for him in God."

- ⁴ Tu autem, Dómine, clí- But thou, O Lord, art my

peus meus es, * glória shield, my glory, thou who *Psalms*
mea, qui érigis caput liftest up my head.
meum.—

3

Confidence in God:

Voce mea ad Dóminum With my voice I called up-
clamávi, * et exaudívit on the Lord, and he heark-
me de monte sancto suo. ened to me from his holy
mountain.

Ego decúbui et obdor- I laid me down and I
mivi: * exsurréxi, quia slept: I arose, for the Lord
Dóminus susténtat me. upholds me.

Non timebo milia pó- I shall not fear even thou-
puli, * quæ in circúitu sands of the people, who
contra me consistunt.— are marshaled against me
round about.

A prayer for complete deliverance:

Exsúrge, Dómine! * Sal- Arise, O Lord! Save me,
vum me fac, Deus meus! O my God!

Nam maxíllam percus- For thou hast smitten the
sisti ómnium adversán- cheek of all who assail me,
tium mihi, * dentes pec- thou hast broken the teeth
catórum confregísti. of the wicked.

Penes Dóminum est sa- Salvation is of the Lord:
lus: * Super pópulum May thy blessing be upon
tuum sit benedíctio tua! thy people!

Commentary

According to its title, this psalm was composed by David when he had to flee from Jerusalem during the rebellion of his son, Absalom. There is such widespread rebellion, that there seems to be no hope for the psalmist, even in God.

5-7: But he knows God is his protector. So he raises a trusting cry for help; and, confident of the Lord's protection, he sleeps calmly even when surrounded by countless enemies.

8-9: He prays with assurance that the Lord will defeat his unjust persecutors, save him, and bless his people.

Reflection

The Catholic should never fear evil for he is defended by God's grace. His many past deliverances should reassure him that God, his defender and the lifter up of his head, has surrounded him with perpetual mercy.

To Obtain a Joyful and Peaceful Night's Rest

A prayer of absolute confidence in God. The prophet gives expression to the blessings of spiritual joy and inward peace with which God has favored him.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Fidibus. For the choir-master. Or
Psalmus. Davidis. stringed instruments. A psalm
of David.

A plea for God's help:

- 2 **C**um invocávero, exáu- **H**ear me when I call. O
di me, Deus justítiæ my just God, thou who
meæ, qui in tribulatióne in distress didst lift me up,
me sublevásti; * mise- have pity on me and hear
rère mei et exáudi ora- my prayer.
tiónem meam.—

Certain that God will hear his prayer, David addresses his foes:

- 3 Viri, quousque estis gra- Ye men, how long are you
ves corde? * quare dili- hard-hearted? Why do you
gitis vanitatem et quæ- love vanity and seek after
ritis mendacium? lying?
- 4 Scitote: mirabilem fa- Know ye: the Lord mar-
cit Dóminus sanctum velously favors his holy
suum; * Dóminus exáu- one; the Lord will hear me
diet me, cum invocávero when I call to him.
eum.
- 5 Contremiscite et nolite Tremble, and sin not. Pon-
peccare, * recogitate in der within your hearts, up-
córdibus vestris, in cu- on your beds, and be silent
bilibus vestris, et obmu-
tescite.
- 6 Sacrificáte sacrificia ju- Offer sacrifices of right-
sta, * et speráte in Dó- eousness, and hope in the
mino.— Lord.

He encourages his friends:

- 6 Multi dicunt: "Quis Many say: "Who will show
osténdet nobis bona?" * us good things?" Lift up

Extolle super nos lumen the light of thy countenance upon us, O Lord! *Psalm*

Dedisti lætítiam in cor Thou hast given greater joy to my heart than that of men who abound in corn and wine.

In pace, simul ac decubui, obdormisco, quóniam tu solus, Dómine, * alone, O Lord, makest me in securitáte me constítuis. to dwell in security.

Commentary

The psalmist, David (according to the title) recalls God's ever present aid, and begs to be heard in dangers now threatening.

3-6: Then he warns all godless rebels to repent, for the Lord favors only the pious. (The Hebrew of verse 3a: "How long will you turn my glory into shame?" is better corrected to: "How long will you be hard-hearted?"

7-9: To all malcontents, he announces that only a righteous trust in the Lord will be a source of his abundant blessings.

Reflection

Although we may have offended God by our sins, still we should never despair. God will pour upon us his loving-kindness if we try to shun sin and put our trust in him.

PSALM 5

Recourse to God

To Be Given Divine Guidance

A prayer for divine aid against godless enemies. He addresses God as one who hates all evildoers, but who blesses and protects those that love him.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Ad tibias. For the choir-master. On flutes.
Psalmus. Davidis. A psalm of David.

David invokes God in the morning, and prays to be heard:

Verba mea áuribus percípe, Dómine, * **G**ive ear to my words, O Lord, give heed to my ténde gémitum meum, groaning.

Psalm Advérte voci oratiónis Hearken to my appeal, O
 5 meæ, * Rex meus et Deus my king and my God!
 meus!

Te enim déprecor, 4 Dó- For I beseech thee, O
 mine; mane audis vo- Lord; in the morning thou
 cem meam; * mane pro- hearest my voice; in the
 póno tibi preces meas et morning I offer my prayers
 exspecto.— to thee and I wait.

He bases his confidence on the sanctity of God:

5 Tu enim non es Deus, For thou art not a God
 cui pláceat iníquitas, who takes pleasure in wick-
 malignus apud te non edness, the wicked man
 commorátur, * 6 neque abides not with thee, and
 ímpii consistunt coram the ungodly do not stand
 te. before thee.

Odísti omnes qui pa- Thou hatest all that do
 trant iníqua, * 7 perdis iniquity, thou destroyest
 omnes qui loquúntur all that speak a lie;
 mendácium;

Virum cruéntum et The Lord abhors the
 dolósum * abominátur bloody and deceitful man,
 Dóminus.—

May God help the psalmist:

8 Ego autem, pro multi- But I, by the abundance
 tudine grátiae tuæ, * of thy mercy, shall enter
 ingrédiam domum tuam, into thy house,

Prostérnar ad templum I shall worship with rever-
 sanctum tuum * in ti- ence at thy holy temple, O
 móre tuo, 9 Dómine. Lord.

Deduc me in justítia Lead me in thy justice,
 tua propter inimícos because of my foes; make
 meos; * complána viam smooth thy way before me.
 tuam coram me.—

Punishment of the wicked:

10 Nam in ore istórum non For there is no sincerity im
 est sincéritas; * cor eó- their speech; their heart
 rum insídias molitur; devises treachery,

8 Sepúlcrum patens est Their throat is an open

guttur eorum; * linguas graves, they flatter with *Psalm*
suis blandiuntur. their tongues. 5

Castiga eos, Deus, * excide Punish them, O God, let
eum; * eos perire in consiliis; them perish in their plans;

Propter crimina eorum Cast them out because of
multa expelle eos, * nam their countless crimes, for
contra te rebelles sunt.— they are rebellious against
thee.

*A continuance of the divine favor for the faithful
friends of God:*

Lætentur autem omnes But let all who flee to thee
qui confugiunt ad te, * be glad and exult forever.
in perpétuum exsultent.

Et protégas eos et læ And mayest thou keep
tentur de te, * qui dili them safe, and may they
gunt nomen tuum. who love thy name rejoice
in thee.

Nam tu benedices ju- For thou wilt bless the
sto, Dómine: * benevo- just man, O Lord: thou
léntia, velut scuto, cir- wilt surround him with thy
cúmdabis eum. loving-kindness as with a
shield.

Commentary

David, for the title attributes the psalm to him, begins the
Lord, his King and God, to hear his constant prayer.

5-7: He protests that he tries to avoid all evil that would
prevent his being a welcome guest in the Lord's presence.

8-9: Through God's mercy he is such a guest. He asks the
Lord to continue to guide him safely in his paths despite the
snares set by his enemies.

10-11: He asks that the Lord frustrate the smooth deceits
of these rebels against the divine will.

12-13: Then he pictures the exultation of all good men who
trust and love the Lord when they experience how the Lord's
protection is their shield.

Reflection

Sin is hateful to God because it is opposed to his
divine nature, which is all holiness. Yet he loves
the sinner, and in his goodness God invites such
a one to return to him, and the bitter lamenting of
sin will merit his clemency.

Psalm

PSALM 6

6

A Plea for Mercy

When in Distress

A prayer in time of need. Chastised by God, the psalmist in great anguish and with tears of repentance appeals to the merciful Lord for deliverance.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Fidibus. Su- For the choir-master. On
per octavam. Psalmus. Davi- stringed instruments. An octave
dis. lower. A psalm of David.

A cry for help:

- 2 **D**ómine, noli me argú- **R**e buke me not in thine
ere in ira tua, * nec anger. O Lord, and in
me corripere in furóre thy fury chastise me not.
tuo.
3 Miserére mei, Dómine, Have pity on me. O Lord.
quóniam infirmus sum; for I am weak; heal me. O
* sana me, Dómine, quón- Lord, for my bones are
iam conturbáta sunt os- shaken.
sa mea,
4 Et ánima mea contur- And my soul is deeply
báta est valde; * sed tu, troubled; but thou, O Lord.
Dómine, quóúsque ...?— how long?

Prayer for deliverance from death:

- 5 Revértere, Dómine, éri- Return, O Lord, rescue my
pe ánimam meam, * sal- soul; save me for thy
vum me fac propter mi- mercy's sake.
sericórdiam tuam,
6 Quóniam non est in For in death there is none
morte qui recordétur tui: that remembers thee: who
* apud ínferos quis te shall praise thee among the
laudat?— dead?

His utter misery:

- 7 Deféssus sum gémitu I am wearied with my
meo, fletu per singulas groaning, every night I
10 noctes rigo lectum me- wash my couch with my

um, * lácrimis meis stratum meum perfúndo. weeping, I bedew my bed with my tears. *Psalms*
 8 Caligat mæroré óculus meus, * inveteráscit propter omnes inimícos meos.— Mine eye is wasted away with grief; it grows old because of all my enemies. **6**

Expression of confidence because his prayer has been heard:

- 9 Recédite a me omnes qui fácitis iniquitátem, * quóniam Dóminus audívit vocem fletus mei; Depart from me, all ye that do evil, for the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping;
 10 Dóminus audívit precatiónem meam, * Dóminus oratiónem meam suscepít. The Lord has heard my pleading, the Lord has received my prayer.
 11 Erubéscant et conturbéntur veheménter omnes inimíci mei; * recédant et erubéscant velóciter. Let all my foes be abashed and utterly confused; let them fall back and quickly be covered with shame.

Commentary

The author (David again, according to the title) asks the Lord why he delays to deliver him from bitter anguish.

5-6: He appeals to the Lord's mercy and asks how he can give him praise if he dies (verse 6b in the Hebrew: "Who in the abode of the dead can praise thee?"—the full doctrine of the future life was not revealed at this time).

7-8: He calls the Lord to witness his exhaustion from mourning and suffering.

9-11: Then from the midst of this sorrowful situation he cries out with assurance that the Lord has heard his prayer and will nullify the work of the enemies who are causing this suffering.

Reflection

Penance is not something to be done once and then left alone; we must practice it day by day as long as we live, and even in the time of affliction. Like David, we should lament our offenses every night, and the Lord will hear our petitions and receive our prayers.

Psalm

PSALM 7

7

God's Justice

When Falsely Accused

An appeal to God, the Supreme Judge, against wicked enemies. By his sentence God sitting once again as world-judge will put an end to evil, and protect the just.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Lamentatio Davidis, quam A lamentation of David, when
cantavit Domino propter he sang to the Lord because of
Chus Benjaminitam. the words of Chus the Benjaminite.

The psalmist appeals to God:

- 2 **D**ómine Deus meus, ad **O** Lord, my God, to thee
te confúgio; * salva do I flee; save me from
me ab ómnibus perse- all that pursue me and de-
quéntibus me et libera liver me;
me;
3 Ne quis rápiat ut leo Lest anyone pounce on me
ánimam meam, * discér- like a lion, and mangle me
pat, nec sit qui erípiat.— with none to save me.

He protests his innocence:

- 4 Dómine Deus meus, si O Lord, my God, if I have
feci istud, * si est iní- done this thing, if there be
quitas in mánibus meis, wickedness in my hands.
5 Si áttuli amico meo If I have brought evil on
malum, * qui salvávi ad- my friend, I, who have
versántes mihi injúste: saved those who are un-
justly oppressing me:
6 Insequátur inimícus Let the enemy pursue me
ánimam meam et appreh- and seize me, let him tram-
éndat, concúlcet in ter- ple my life to the ground
ram vitam meam, * et and let him throw my
honórem meum in púl- honor to the dust.
verem prostérnat.—

An appeal to the divine judgment:

- 7 Exsúrge, Dómine, in ira Arise, O Lord, in thine
tua, érige te contra rá- anger, lift thyself up
biem oppriméntium me, against the madness of
12 * et surge pro me in my enemies, and rise up on

judicio, quod indixisti. my behalf in the judgment *Psalm*
which thou hast ordained.

Et cœtus natiónum cir- Let the assembly of the
cúmdet te, * et sede su- nations gather around
per eum in alto. thee, and sit thou above
them on high.

Dóminus judex est po- The Lord is judge of peo-
pulórum: jus redde mi- ples: deal out justice to me,
hi, Dómine, secúndum O Lord, according to my
justitiam meam * et right and the innocence
secundum innocéntiam, which is in me.
quæ est in me.

Désinat nequítia impió- May the malice of the
rum et confirma justum, wicked cease, and do thou
* scrutans corda et re- strengthen the just man,
nes. Deus juste. O just God, thou who
searchest reins and hearts!

God punishes the wicked:

Clípeus mihi est Deus, My shield is God, who
" qui salvat rectos corde. saves men of upright heart.

Deus est judex justus, God is a just judge, and a
et Deus cóminans God who is threatening
quotídie. every day.

Nisi convertántur, ácu- Unless they be converted,
et gládium suum, * ten- he will whet his sword, he
det arcum et diriget eum, will bend his bow and take
aim with it.

Et eis parábit tela mor- And he will prepare dead-
tis, * sagítas suas fáciet ly weapons for them, he
ardéntes.— will make his arrows things
of fire.

The evil are punished by their own sins:

Ecce, concépit iniquitá- Behold, he has conceived
tem et grávidus est ma- evil and is in labor with
lítia * et parit dolum. malice and brings forth
treachery.

Fossam fodit et exca- He opened a ditch and dug
vávít, * sed incidit in it deep, but he has fallen
fóveam quam fecit. into the pit that he made.

- Psalm* Convertétur malítia His wickedness shall reco-
8 ejus in caput ipsíus, * et upon his own head; and hi
in vérticem ipsíus vio- violence shall turn bac
léntia ejus redíbit. upon his own pate.
18 Ego autem laudábo Dó- But I will praise the Lor
minum pro justítia ejus, for his justice and I wi
* et psallam nómini Dó- sing to the name of th
mini altíssimi. Lord, the Most High.

Commentary

David (cf. the title, which seems to connect the psalm with Saul's jealous desire to kill David as described in 1 King 21-24) again asks the Lord's protection in bitter persecution.

4-6: He cries out that if he were guilty of the evil for which he is persecuted, he would willingly accept destruction.

7-10: As a plaintiff he calls upon the Lord to sit as Judge and deliver judgment for the innocent.

11-14: For, being innocent, he trusts the Lord as the savior of the innocent. But the guilty are warned that, though the Lord is a long-suffering Judge, he will deal out terrible punishment to them unless they repent.

15-18: This punishment will consist mainly in making the own evil plans rebound to their own destruction. Then the psalmist will sing the praises of the Lord's justice.

Reflection

This psalm gives us the assurance that Christ the Lion of the tribe of Juda, will deliver us from the devil, the roaring lion, who with his minions goes about seeking whom he may devour.

PSALM 8

God's Wondrous Works

A Proper Estimate of Self

The glory of God as revealed in nature and in man. Man's insignificance is contrasted with his elevation by God to be his viceroy over creation in all its varied forms.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Ad modum For the choir-master. To the melody of the song "The Wonders of God." A psalm of David.

The greatness of God as reflected in the heavens:

- 14 **D**ómine, Dómine no- **O** Lord, our Lord, ho-
ster, quam admirá- glorious is thy name

bile est nomen tuum in
universa terra, * qui ex-
tulisti majestatem tuam
super cælos.

Ex ore infántium et lac-
téntium parásti laudem
contra adversários tuos,
* ut compéscas inimí-
cum et hostem.

Cum vídeo cælos tuos,
opus digitórum tuórum,
* lunam et stellas quæ
tu fundásti:

Quid est homo, quod
memor es ejus? * aut fi-
lius hóminis, quod curas
de eo?—

all the earth, thou who *Psalm*
hast exalted thy majesty
above the heavens. 8

Out of the mouth of little
children and babes at
breast thou hast prepared
praise to confound thine
enemies, that thou mayest
check the enemy and re-
vengeful foe.

When I gaze at the heav-
ens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which thou hast made:

What is man, that thou
art mindful of him? or the
son of man, that thou hast
care of him?

The greatness of God is shown more especially in man:

Et fecisti eum paulo
minórem Angelis, * gló-
ria et honóre coronásti
eum;

Dedísti ei potestátem
super ópera mánuum
tuárum, * ómnia subje-
cisti pédibus ejus:

Oves et boves univér-
sos, * însuper et pécora
campi,

Vólucres cæli et pisces
maris: * quidquid per-
ámbulat sémitas mári-
um.

Dómine, Dómine no-
ster, * quam admirábile
est nomen tuum in uni-
vérsa terra!

And thou hast made him
a little lower than the
angels, thou hast crowned
him with glory and honor;

Thou hast given him do-
minion over the works of
thy hands; thou hast put
all things under his feet:

Sheep and oxen, all of
them, and the beasts of the
field, too,

The birds of the heaven
and the fishes of the sea:
and whatever traverses the
paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Lord, how
wonderful is thy name in
all the earth!

Psalm

Commentary

9 David (cf. the title) here cries out in wonder at the glory of the Lord as revealed in the heavens—a glory which even children can see and praise, and before which the Lord's enemies should be silent. Man is insignificant compared to this glory.

6-10: Considering this magnificent creation the psalmist is in still greater wonderment that God has thought so much of man as to make him a little less than the angels (so verse 6, the Greek and the Vulgate and St. Paul in Hebrews 2, 6-9, but the Hebrew can mean: "a little less than God," and so Jerome translates) by setting him as master over it all.

Reflection

It was God who created the domestic animals and the wild beasts, as well as the fish and the birds, for the service of man. Man, therefore, should delight in the service of God, whose Name is wonderful in all the earth.

PSALM 9

Judgment

A Prayer of Thanks

A hymn of praise and thanksgiving for the overthrow of his enemies. A vivid description of the just judgments of God upon all the sinners of the world.

A

The title of the psalm:

- ¹ Magistro chori. Ad modum cantici. Psalmus. Davidis. For the choir-master. To the melody of the song "Mut Labben." A psalm of David.

David thanks God for the defeat of his enemies:

- ² **C**elebrábo te, Dómine, **I** will praise thee, O Lord, toto corde meo, * with my whole heart. I enarrábo ómnia mirabilia tua. I will tell of all thy wondrous works.
- ³ Lætábor et exsultábo de te, * psallam nómini tuo, Altíssime, I will be glad and I will rejoice in thee, I will sing to thy name, O Most High.
- ⁴ Quia cessérunt inimíci mei retrórsus, * corruérunt et periérunt a fácie tua.— Because my enemies have fallen down, they have stumbled and perished before thy face.

Judgment on the Gentiles:

Psalm.

9

1. Nam suscepisti iudici- For thou hast taken in
um meum et causam hand my right and my
meam, * sedisti super cause, thou hast seated
solum, iudex justus. thyself on thy throne as a
just judge.
2. Increpasti gentes, per- Thou hast rebuked the na-
didisti impium, * nomen tions, thou hast brought
eorum delisti in ætér- the wicked man to death,
num. thou hast blotted out their
name forever.
3. Inimici defecerunt, in The foes are crushed, cast
ruinas sempiternas acti, down into everlasting ruin,
* et urbes destruxisti: and thou hast destroyed
periit memoria eorum.— cities: their memory has
perished.

God, who is just, never abandons his friends:

4. Dominus autem in æ- But the Lord sits en-
ternum sedet, * stabili- throned forever, he has
vit ad iudicandum soli- prepared his throne for
um suum. judgment.
5. Et ipse iudicabit orbem And he himself will judge
cum iustitia, * jus dicet the world with justice;
populis cum æquitate. with equity he will judge
the peoples.
10. Et erit Dominus refú- And the Lord will be a
gium oppresso, * refúgi- refuge for the oppressed, a
um opportunum tempó- ready refuge in times of
ribus angustiae. trouble.
11. Et sperabunt in te qui And they that know thy
novérunt nomen tuum, name will put their trust
* quia non derelinquis in thee, for thou forsakest
querentes te, Domine. not them that seek thee, O
Lord.

Exhortation to thank God, who has avenged his people:

12. Psállite Dómino qui há- Sing to the Lord, who
bitat in Sion, * annun- dwells in Sion, make known
tiáte in populis ópera his works among the peo-
ejus, ples,

Psalm Quia ultor ságuinis re- For the avenger of blood
 cordátus est eórum, * remembered them, he has
 9 non est oblítus clamóris not forgotten the cry of the
 páuperum. afflicted.

Prayer of the psalmist that God may deliver him yet more from his enemies:

- 14 Miserére mei, Dómine: Have pity on me, O Lord:
 vide afflictiónem quam behold the misery which I
 pátiar ab inimícis meis, suffer from my foes, thou
 * extóllens me de portis who liftest me up from the
 mortis, gates of death,
- 15 Ut annúntiem omnes That I may proclaim all
 laudes tuas in portis fí- thy praises in the gates of
 liæ Sion, * et exsúltem the daughter of Sion, and
 de auxílio tuo.— rejoice because of thy help.
- 16 Demérsæ sunt gentes The nations have fallen
 in fóveam quam fecé- into the pit which they
 runt, * láqueo, quem themselves dug, their foot
 abscondérunt, captus est is caught in the snare
 pes eórum. which they hid.
- 17 Manifestávit se Dómi- The Lord has manifested
 nus, júdicium fecit; * himself, he has given judg-
 opéribus mánuum suá- ment; the sinner is en-
 rum irretítus est peccá- snared in the works of his
 tor.— own hands.
- 18 Recédant peccatóres ad Let sinners retire into
 ínferos, * omnes gentes hell, all the nations that
 quæ oblítæ sunt Dei. have forgotten God.
- 19 Neque enim in perpé- For the needy shall not be
 tuum oblivióni dábitur perpetually forgotten, nor
 pauper, * fidúcia mise- shall the confidence of the
 rorum non períbit in afflicted perish forever.
 ætérnum.
- 20 Exsúrge, Dómine: ne Arise, O Lord: let not man
 præváleat homo; * judi- prevail; let the nations be
 céntur gentes in con- judged in thy presence.
 spéctu tuo.
- 18 Incute, Dómine, terró- Do thou strike them with

rem eis; * sciant gentes dread, O Lord; let the nations know they are but men. Psalm 9

B

When God Seems Far Off

A description of the oppression of the poor and lowly within the nation:

1 **Q**uare, Dómine, distas **W**hy, O Lord, dost thou
procul, * abscondis stand afar off, and
te tempóribus angústiaē, hide thyself in times of
trouble,

2 Dum supérbit impius, While the wicked man is
vexátur miser, * cápitur puffed up, the needy man
dolus quos ille confín- is distressed, he is trapped
xit?— in the plots the other has
devised?

3 Nam peccátor gloriátur For the sinner boasts of
de cupidine sua, * et rap- his covetousness, and the
pax blasphemát, Dómi- spoiler curses, scorns the
num spernit. Lord.

4 Ait impius in supérbia In his pride of spirit the
mentis: "Non vindicá- wicked man says: "He will
bit; non est Deus": * not punish; there is no
hæc est omnis cogitatio God." Such is all his
ejus. thought.

5 Prósperæ sunt viæ ejus His ways prosper all the
omni tempore; longe di- time; thy judgments are
stant iudicia tua a men- far from his mind; he
te ejus; * omnes adver- scorns all his enemies.
sários suos contémnit.

6 Dicit in corde suo: He says in his heart: "I
"Non commovébór: * a shall not be shaken; from
generatióne in genera- generation to generation I
tiónem non ero infélix." shall not be miserable."

7 Maledictiône os ejus His mouth is full of curs-
plenum est et fraude et ing and guile and deceit,
dolo, * sub lingua ejus under his tongue are toil
labor et vexatio. and mischief.

Sedet in insídiis prope He waits in ambush near

Psalm vicos, in occúltis occidit the villages, in dark places
innocéntem; * óculi ejus he murders the innocent;
9 páuperem speculántur. his eyes spy out the poor
man.

⁹ Insidiátur in látebris He lurks in the dark places
sicut leo in spelúnca sua; like a lion in his lair: he
insidiátur ut rápiat mí- lies in ambush to catch the
serum: * rapit míserum helpless man: he seiz-
trahítque in rete suum. him and drags him into his
net.

¹⁰ Incurvátur, prostérnit He stoops, he crouches on
se humi, * et violéntia the ground, and the poor
ejus páuperes cadunt. fall before his violence.

¹¹ Dicit in corde suo: He says in his heart: "God
"Oblítus est Deus, * avér- has forgotten! he turns
tit fáciem suam, non vi- aside his face, he never
det unquam." sees."

*An appeal that God may intervene in behalf of the
innocent afflicted, with a confident anticipation of the
psalmist that his prayer will be heard:*

¹² Exsúrge, Dómine Deus, Arise, O Lord God, lift up
extólle manum tuam! * thy hand! Forget not the
noli páuperem oblivísci! afflicted!

¹³ Quare spérnit ímpius Why does the wicked man
Deum, * dicit in corde scorn God, and say in his
suo: "Non vindicábit"? heart: "he will not inflict
punishment?"

¹⁴ Tu autem vides: tu la- But thou dost see: thou
bórem et mærórem con- beholdest labor and pain
sideras, * ut ponas ea in that thou mayest take
mánibus tuis. them into thy own care.

Tibi se pauper commít- To thee the poor man en-
tit, * órphano tu es ad- trusts himself; thou art the
jútor! helper of the fatherless!

¹⁵ Cóntere brácchium pec- Break thou the arm of the
catóris et maligni: * vin- sinner and of the evildoer:
dicábis malítiam ejus, thou shalt punish his
nec subsístet.— malice, and it will not re-
main.

20 Dóminus rex est in sæ- The Lord is King for ever

- culum sæculi, * perierunt gentes de terra ejus. and ever, the nations have perished from his land. *Psalm.*
1. Desiderium miserorum audisti, Dómine, * confirmasti cor eorum, aures præbuisti, Thou, O Lord, hast given heed to the longing of the afflicted; thou hast strengthened their heart, thou hast lent an ear, **9**
1. Ut jus tu caris órphani et opprèssi, * neque ultra terrórem incutiát homo terrénus. In order that thou mayest uphold the right of the fatherless and the oppressed, and that mere man may no more cause terror.

Commentary

David (so the title) sings a song of thanksgiving because the Lord has given him victory over aggressor nations.

8-13: So the Lord ever sits on his throne of judgment to give just protection to the oppressed in time of need. He does not disappoint those who trust in him. Let unbelievers learn that he avenges crimes against the poor.

14-17: He prays for further protection from his enemies by the Lord who has rescued him from the very gates of death. Then again will he proclaim how the pagans were caught in their own snares through the just judgment of the Lord.

18-21: He prays that the godless may be punished, and that the poor and the meek may be saved by a judgment that will strike fear into the hearts of the godless (following the Hebrew in verse 21: "Strike fear into them.")

1-11: He points out that it appears as though the Lord were forgetting his people when the wicked are successful in their plots against the poor. He describes the blasphemous arrogance in the hearts and on the lips and in the actions of the prosperous oppressors of the weak and innocent.

12-18: He makes a final appeal for the Lord to arise in judgment to prove to persecutor and persecuted that he is not disinterested in their actions. The psalmist's motive for trusting that the Lord will do this is the present defeat of his enemies. It is a proof that the Lord is ever certain to exercise justice for the oppressed who trust in him.

Reflection

All the devices of sinful men, all their efforts, all their laws with even their violence, are but the feeble endeavors of mortals against the omnipotence of a wise God.

Psalm

PSALM 10

10

Security of the Just

When Tempted by Discouragement

Confidence in God, the just man's shield against those who plot his death. God rewards the just, but dreadful punishments are in store for the wicked.

David's friends recommend that he flee to the safety of the hills

- 1 Magistro chori. Davidis. For the choir-master. Of David.
Ad Dóminum confúgio; **I** flee unto the Lord; how
 quómo do dicitis áni- say ye to my soul: "Fly
 mæ meæ: * "tránsvola away like a bird unto the
 in montem sicut avis! mountain!
 2 Ecce enim peccatóres For behold, the wicked
 tendunt arcum, ponunt bend their bow, they fit
 sagittam suam super the arrow to the string, t
 nervum, * ut sagittent shoot in the darkness at
 in obscúro rectos corde. the upright of heart.
 3 Quando fundaménta When the foundations are
 evertúntur, * justus quid overthrown, what can the
 fácere valet?"— just man do?"

His faith and confidence in God:

- 4 Dóminus in templo san- The Lord is in his holy
 cto suo; * Dóminus—in temple; the Lord — his
 cælo sedes ejus. throne is in heaven.
 Oculi ejus respiciunt, * His eyes behold, his eye
 pálpebræ ejus scrután- lids probe the children of
 tur fílios hóminum. men.
 5 Dóminus scrutátur ju- The Lord tries the just
 stum et ímpium; * qui man and the unjust; he
 diligit iniquitátem, hunc hates the one who loves
 odit ánima ejus. iniquity.
 6 Pluēt super peccatóres He will rain burning coals
 carbónes ignitos et sul- and brimstone on sinners;
 phur; * ventus ástuans the scorching wind shall be
 pars cálicis eórum. their portion.
 22 Nam justus est Dómi- For the Lord is just; he

nus, justítiam díligit; * loves justice; upright men *Psalm*
 recti vidébunt fáciem shall behold his face. **11**
 ejus.

Commentary

David (so the title) asserts his trust in the Lord in the face of those who counsel flight after an overwhelming defeat.

4-7: The Lord remains unshaken on his throne, watching carefully the doings of men, both just and sinful. The sinners will be destroyed by the Lord who is holy, and who loves holiness so much that "the just shall see his face," (so the Hebrew in verse 8b; the Vulgate has: "His face looks only upon justice.")

Reflection

We must remember that when duty calls us, we should never try to escape it. We should never place any temporal advantage, such as personal safety, before the course that our conscience dictates to be followed.

PSALM 11

Divine Protection

For the Grace to Wait for God's Good Time

A cry for help against enemies. The psalmist laments the insincerity and flattery of men; but remembering God's promise to help the just, he is full of confidence in God's word.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Super octa- For the choir-master. An
 vam. Psalmus. Davidis. octave lower. A psalm of David.

A cry for help in the midst of prevailing sinfulness:

Salva, Dómine! Nam **R**escue, O Lord! For the
 deficiunt pii, * désiit just are passing away,
 fidelitas inter filios hó- faithfulness is dying out
 minum. among the children of men.

Fallácia loquúntur They speak falsehoods
 unusquisque ad próxi- each to his neighbor; they
 mum suum, * lábiis do- speak with flattering lips
 lóis loquúntur et dúpli- and an insincere heart.
 ci corde.

A prayer for the destruction of his boastful foes:

Exstirpet Dóminus óm- May the Lord destroy all **23**

Psalm nia lábia dolósa, * lin- lips that flatter, the boast-
 11 guam magníloquam, ful tongue.
 Eos qui dicunt: "Lin- Those who say: "Through
 gua nostra fortes sumus; our tongue we are strong.
 lábia nostra pro nobis our lips are for us: who is
 sunt: * quis nobis est lord over us?"
 dóminus?"—

God hears the prayer:

- 6 "Propter afflictiónem "Because of the affliction
 humílium et gémitum of the burdened and the
 páuperum, nunc exsúr- groaning of the poor, I will
 gam, dicit Dóminus: * now arise, says the Lord: I
 cónferam salútem ei qui will bring salvation to him
 desíderat eam."— who longs for it."

Expression of confidence in God's protection:

- 7 Elóquia Dómini sunt The words of the Lord are
 elóquia sincéra, * argén- sincere, silver refined, separá-
 tum probátum, separát- rated from earth, purified
 tum a terra, purgátum seven times.
 sépties.
 8 Tu, Dómine, servábis Thou, O Lord, wilt guard
 nos, * custódies nos a us; thou wilt keep us safe
 generatióne hac in ætér- from this generation for
 num. ever.
 9 In circúitu ímpii ámbu- The wicked are all around.
 lant, * cum se extóllunt while the vilest among men
 vilíssimi hóminum. exalt themselves.

Commentary

David (cf. the title) calls upon the Lord for help against universal infidelity, deceit, and blasphemy.

6-9: The Lord answers that he will set things right. Whereupon the psalmist breaks out in praise of the sanctity of God's promises and expresses his trust in God even though wickedness seems to be prospering (verse 9 in the Hebrew is obscure. The sense seems to be: "The wicked parade about, when evil is exalted among the sons of men").

Reflection

24 **S**t. Paul in his epistle to the Philippians (11, 15) urged all Christians: "... be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in

the midst of a depraved and perverse generation. For *Psalms*
among these you shine like stars in the world." **12**

PSALM 12

Anguish

For a Person in Great Sorrow

A prayer in the time of trial. This psalm shows three stages of devout prayer: a plaintive cry, fervent prayer and firm confidence in God.

David complains that God seems to abandon him:

Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm Davidis.

Quóusque, Dómine? **H**ow long, O Lord, wilt
obliviscéris mei om- thou utterly forget me?
nino? * quóusque abs- How long wilt thou hide
cóndes fáciem tuam a thy face from me?
me?

Quóusque volvam do- How long shall I ponder
lores in ánima mea, * the sorrows in my soul, and
mærórem in corde meo grief in my heart every
quotidie? day?

Quóusque seextólet in- How long shall my foe
mícus meus super me? * exalt himself over me?

A prayer in a calmer tone:

réspice, exáudi me, Dó- Look, hear me, O Lord, my
mine, Deus meus!— God!

Illústra óculos meos, ne Give light to mine eyes,
obdórmiam in morte, * lest I sleep in death, lest my
ne dicat inimícus meus: foe say: "I have vanquish-
"devíci eum"; ed him";

Ne exsúltent adversárii Lest my enemies rejoice
mei, quod corrúerim: * that I have fallen, because
cum confisus sim in mi- I have trusted in thy mercy.
sericórdia tua.

Exsúltet cor meum de Let my heart rejoice be-
auxílio tuo; * cantem cause of thy help, let me
Dómino, qui bona trí- sing to the Lord, who has
buit mihi. bestowed good things upon
me.

Psalm

Commentary

13 David (so the title of the psalm) after a period of apparent abandonment by the Lord, which was almost to the death, cries out for relief lest his enemies have cause to rejoice.

4b-6: Then he expresses his confidence that through the mercy of the Lord he will yet sing the praises of his saving kindness.

Reflection

We should school ourselves in prayer. A day will surely come when our dreams will seem shattered, when we shall feel ourselves betrayed by our friends, when crosses that appear unbearable will overwhelm us. The habit of prayer will sustain us in such straits.

PSALM 13

Unbelievers

To Obtain Conversion of Sinners

The psalmist presents a sad picture of the universal corruption of men. If the godless do not return to their senses, they shall not escape the divine punishments.

A complaint because of the universal depravity of men.

- ¹ Magistro chori. Davidis. For the choir-master. Of David.

Dicit insípiens in corde suo: * “Non est Deus.” **T**he fool says in his heart: “There is no God.”

Corrúpti sunt, abominánda egerunt; * non est, qui fáciat bonum. They are corrupt, they have done things that must be abhorred; there is not one that does what is good.

- ² Dóminus de cælo próspicit super fílios hóminum, * ut vídeat num sit, qui intélligat et quærat Deum. The Lord looks down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there be one who understands and who seeks God.

- ³ Omnes simul aberravérunt, depraváti sunt: * non est qui fáciat bonum, non est nec unus.— All have gone astray together, all have turned away to evil: there is not one who does what is good, there is not even one.

The condign punishment of the wicked:

Psalm

13

Nonne resipíscēt om- Will they not return to
nes qui faciunt iniquitá- their senses, they that do
tem, * qui devorant póp- evil, they that eat up my
ulum meum, sicut cōm- people as they eat bread?
edunt panem?

Dóminum non invoca- They have not called upon
verunt: * tum trepidá- the Lord: then they shall
bunt timóre, * quóniam tremble with terror, for the
Deus cum generatióne Lord is with the generation
justa est. of the just.

Consilium míseri vultis You want to overthrow
confundere: * sed Dómi- the counsel of the afflicted:
nus est refúgium ejus.— but the Lord is his refuge.

Prayer for the deliverance of Israel:

Utinam véniat ex Sion Oh, may the salvation of
salus Israëli! cum vér- Israel come forth from
terit Dóminus sortem Sion! When the Lord shall
pópuli sui, * exsultábit change his people's lot,
Jacob, lætábitur Israëli. then shall Jacob be joyful,
Israel glad.

Commentary

This psalm (Davidic according to the title) is identical with psalm 52, except that 3b in the Vulgate ("their throat is like an open sepulchre" etc.) is inserted from Romans 3, 13-18; and verses 5 and 6 differ from verse 6 of psalm 52. Moreover "Yahweh" ("Lord") is found in this psalm where psalm 52 has "Elohim" ("God"). The psalmist pictures a state of complete godlessness and depravity among men.

4-6: The fate of the godless is described; they are the prey of false fears; their plans are frustrated in favor of the just.

7: The Lord's help is asked for captive Israel.

Reflection

In your Morning Offering include the intention that God may give the light of faith to all unbelievers, so that they may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they may have life in his name.

Psalm

PSALM 14

14

Heavenly Dwellers

The Ideal Man of God

What kind of men shall enter into the House of the Lord? None but the man that is honest, straightforward, careful of his neighbor's good reputation, trustworthy, and averse to unlawful gain and bribery.

Who is worthy to dwell in God's presence:

¹ Psalmus. Davidis.

A psalm of David.

Dómine, quis commorabitur in tabernaculo tuo,* quis habitabit in monte sancto tuo?— **W**ho shall dwell in thy tabernacle, O Lord? Who shall live on thy holy mountain?

What conditions must be fulfilled to enter God's House:

² Qui ambulat sine mácula et facit justitiam et cogitat recta in corde suo,* ³ nec calumniatur lingua sua; He who walks without sin, who acts with justice, who thinks truth in his heart, and slanders not with his tongue;

Qui non facit próximo suo malum,* neque opprobrium infert vicino suo; Who does no evil to his neighbor, nor casts slur upon his neighbor;

⁴ Qui contemptibilem aestimat improbum,* tíméntes vero Dóminum honórat; Who holds the sinner in disdain, but honors them that fear the Lord;

Qui, etsi jurávit cum damno suo, non mutat, ⁵ pecúniam suam non dat ad usúram* neque accipit múnera contra innocentem.— Who, although he has taken an oath to his own harm, changes it not; he lends not his money at usury, and takes no bribe against the innocent.

Qui facit hæc,* non movébitur in ætérnum. He that does these things shall never be moved.

Commentary

The psalmist (in the title, David) here asks who is worthy to be a guest of the Lord in his sanctuary.

2-5: The answer is: the man who leads a blameless life, honest and sincere, just in word and action: despising evil

men, honoring the godfearing; abiding by his oath at any cost, taking no usury or bribes. Such a man will be permanently in the Lord's friendship. *Psalm*

15

Reflection

Our Lord does not expect us always to glow with fervor when we pray. It is well if we feel enraptured, but it is not necessary for the efficacy of prayer. The Lord wants only our good-will. But that means preparing ourselves for prayer by recollection, attention, and a fitting posture.

PSALM 15

Our Inheritance

God Is Our True Happiness

This psalm is directly messianic. It depicts Christ's future triumph over the world and death by his resurrection and entrance into eternal life.

An appeal for protection to God, who alone is Christ's portion:

David's.

A monumental poem of David.

Conserva me, Deus, **P**reserve me, O God, for I quoniam confugio ad flee unto thee; I say to te, * 2 dico Domino: "Dó- the Lord: "Thou art my minus meus es tu; bo- Lord, I have no good with- num mihi non est sine out thee." te."

In sanctos, qui sunt in As for the saints, who are terra ejus, * quam mi- in his land, how wonderful- rabilem fecit omnem af- he has made all my love! fectum meum!

Multiplicant dolóres su- They that follow strange os * qui sequuntur deos gods multiply their sor- alienos. rows.

Non libábo ságuinem I will not make a libation libationum eórum, * nec with the blood of their pronuntiábo nómina eó- offerings, nor will I utter rum lábiis meis. their names on my lips.

Dóminus pars heredi- The Lord is the portion of tátis meæ et cálicis mei: my inheritance and of my * tu es qui tenes sortem cup; it is thou who holdest meam. my lot.

Psalm 15 Funes ceciderunt mihi The lines have fallen to
in amēna; * et herēditas me in pleasant places; and
mea pērlacet mihi.— my inheritance pleases me
exceedingly.

Joy, gratitude, and perfect confidence:

- 7 Benedico Dómino, quod I bless the Lord that he
dedit mihi consilium, * has given me understand-
quod vel per noctem me ing, because even in the
monet cor meum. night my heart admonishes
me.
- 8 Pono Dóminum in con- I keep the Lord always in
spēctu meo semper; * my sight; since he is at my
quóniam a dextris meis right hand, I shall not be
est, non commovēbor. moved.
- 9 Propter hoc lætatur cor Therefore my heart re-
meum et exsultat ánima jices and my soul is glad;
mea, * insuper et caro even my body will rest se-
mea requiescet secúra, cure.
- 10 Quia non relinques áni- For thou wilt not leave my
mam meam apud ínfe- soul in the abode of the
ros, * non sines sanctum dead, nor wilt thou let thy
tuum vidére corruptió- holy one see corruption.
nem.
- 11 Ostēdes mihi sémitam Thou wilt show me the
vitæ, ubertátem gaudió- path of life, the fullness of
rum apud te, * delicias joys in thy presence, de
ad dexteram tuam in lights at thy right hand
perpétuum. forever.

Commentary

David here speaks in the person of the Messiah (see Acts 2 25-28; 13, 35; where the psalm is quoted as a prophecy of the Resurrection of Christ). The psalmist asks the Lord's protection, since he trusts in him and holds to him as his highest good. (Verses 2-4 are variously interpreted. A possible sense of the Hebrew is much as follows: "I say to the Lord, 'Thou art my God; I have no god outside of thee!' How wonderful he has made all my delight in the saints who are in his land. They multiply their woes who hasten after another god.") The psalmist will not sacrifice to false gods nor invoke their name; for the Lord is his treasure, giving a goodly possession.

7-11: He blesses the Lord who gives him this joyous realization. For he knows that the corruption of the grave cannot be his final fate, but that the Lord will restore his life, granting him the vision of his face and joy at his right hand. Psalm 16

Reflection

It is a great solace to know that in the ordeal of death, through which we all must pass, we have our Lord as our companion. He will be our Viaticum leading us to our blessed home in heaven.

PSALM 16

The Afflicted

For Those Who Suffer Persecution

A prayer for justice against ruthless enemies. Declaring his innocence the psalmist feels confident that God will protect him. Unlike his enemies he finds satisfaction in God alone.

An appeal to God, who will not abandon an innocent man:

Precatio. Davidis.

A prayer of David.

Audi, Dómine, justam causam, atténde clamórem meum, * áuribus pécipe oratiónem meam ex lábiis non dolosis. **O** Lord, hear a just cause, hearken to my cry; give ear to my prayer from lips without guile.

A conspéctu tuo júdicium de me pródeat: * óculi tui vident quæ recta sunt. Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; thine eyes behold the things that are right.

Sí scrútáris cor meum, If thou searchest my heart, if thou visitest me in the night, if thou triest me with fire, thou wilt not find sin in me.

Non est transgréssus os meum, hóminum more; * secúndum verba labiórú tuórum ego custodívi vías legis. My mouth has not sinned in the manner of men; according to the words of thy lips, I have kept the ways of the law.

Fírmiter inhæsit gressus meus. My step has held fast to 31

Psalm 16 sus meus sémitis tuis, * thy paths, my feet have not
non titubárunť pedes wavered.
mei.—

A second prayer, because the peril is imminent:

- 6 Ego te ínvo-co, quóniam I call upon thee, for thou
exáudies me, Deus; * in- wilt hearken to me, O God;
clína aurem tuam mihi, incline thine ear toward
audi verbum meum. me, hear my word.
- 7 Mirábilem osténde mi- Show thy wonderful
sericórdiam tuam, * qui mercy, thou who savest
ab adversántibus salvas from their foes those who
confugiéntes ad dexte- take refuge at thy right
ram tuam. hand.
- 8 Custódi me ut pupíllam Guard me as the apple of
óculi, sub umbra alárum thine eye, hide me under
tuárum absconde me * the shadow of thy wings
- 9 a peccatóribus, qui vim from the sinful who use
inferunt mihi.— violence against me.
Inimíci mei cum fu- My foes surround me with
róre me circumvéniunt, fury, they shut up their un-
10 crassum cor suum præ- feeling heart, with then
clúdunt, * ore suo lo- mouth they speak arro-
quúntur supérbe. gantly.
- 11 Passus eórum nunc me Now their steps envelop
circúmdant, * óculos su- me, they keep watch to
os inténdunt, ut in ter- strike me to the ground.
ram prostérnant,
- 12 Símales leóni, qui ín- They are like a lion raven-
hiat prædæ, * et cáculo ing for prey, and a young
leónis, qui in ábditis se- lion that lurks in his lair.
det.—

*A third prayer. The profane joys of his enemies are
contrasted with the heavenly desires of the psalmist:*

- 13 Exsúrge, Dómine, oc- Arise, O Lord, go forth to
cúrre illi, prostérne eum, meet him, strike him down;
éripe a peccátore áni- by thy sword set me free
mam meam gládio tuo, * from the sinner, by thy
manu tua ab homínibus, hand, O Lord, from men:

32 Dómine:

Ab homínibus, quorum *From men, who have their* *Psalm*
pórtio est hæc víta, * et *portion in this life, whose* *17*
quorum ventrem imple *belly thou fillest with thy*
ópibus tuis; *plenty;*

Quorum filii saturán- *Whose sons are filled,*
tur * et relínquunt, quod *and they leave the rest of*
eis súperest, párvulis *their substance to their*
suis. *children.*

Ego autem in justítia *But I in justice shall see*
vidébo fáciem tuam, * *thy face; awaking, I shall*
satiábor, evígilans, aspé- *be satisfied with the sight*
ctu tuo. *of thee.*

Commentary

This psalm—"a prayer of David," according to the title—
calls upon the Lord to hear the psalmist's prayer and to
judge and protect him according to his innocence.

6-12. He is sure that the Lord will hear him and show his
wonderful love for those who trust in him by protecting him
against their common enemy.

13-15: He asks the Lord to arise as a warrior and save him
from his worldly and prosperous oppressors. As for himself,
the psalmist (according to the Hebrew of verse 15) is confident
that because of his innocence he shall see the face of the Lord
and be satisfied when he awakes (from death) with the vision
of God's likeness.

Reflection

Our sufferings may come from the wrongs of
others. If so, we should try to fortify ourselves
against such evils as best we can, while humbly
and confidently resigning ourselves to the will of
God.

PSALM 17

Our Strength

To Excite Oneself to Gratitude

*David thanks God for his delivery from all his enemies.
In his numerous battles he was saved by the mighty
hand of God because of his prayer and uprightness.*

The title of the psalm:

¹ Magistro chori. Davidis, ser- *For the choir-master. A psalm*
vi Domini, qui locutus est ad *of David, the servant of the*
Dominum verba hujus canti- *Lord, who spoke the words of*
ci, quando Dominus eum libe- *this song to the Lord after he*

Psalm raverat e potestate omnium had delivered him from the
17 inimicorum suorum et e manu power of all his foes and from the
Saul. ² Dixit igitur: hand of Saul. He said therefore:

David praises God for his help:

Díligo te, Dómine, for- **I** love thee, O Lord, my
titúdo mea, * ³ Dó- strength, O Lord, my
mine, petra mea, arx rock, my stronghold, and
mea, liberátor meus, my Saviour,

Deus meus, rupes mea, My God, my rocky fast-
in quam confúgio, * cli- ness to which I flee for
peus meus, cornu salútis shelter, my shield, the horn
meæ, præsidium meum! of my salvation, my high
tower!

- ⁴ Laudábilem invocábo I will call upon the Lord
Dóminum, * et ab ini- who is worthy to be praised,
mícis meis salvus ero.— and I will be safe from my
foes.

*David pictures the extremity of need in which he cried
for help:*

- ⁵ Circumdederunt me flu- The floods of death en-
ctus mortis, * et torréntes compassed me, and the tor-
perniciósi terruérunt rents of iniquity terrified
me;

- ⁶ Funes inférni circum- The fetters of Sheol wrapt
pléxi sunt me, * invasé- me round, the snares of
runt me láquei mortis: death enmeshed me:

- ⁷ In tribulatióne mea in- In my distress I called
vocávi Dóminum, * et ad upon the Lord, and I cried
Deum meum clamávi; unto my God;

Et audívit de templo And from his holy temple
suo vocem meam, * et he heard my voice, and my
clamor meus introívit in cry came to his ears.
aures ejus.—

The help that came from heaven:

- ⁸ Et concússa est et con- And the earth was shaken
trémuit terra, funda- and it quaked, the founda-
ménta móntium contur- tions of the mountains
báta sunt * et concússa trembled and were shaken.

sunt, quia flagrábat ira. for he was burning with *Psalm*
rage.

Ascéndit fumus e nári- Smoke went up out of his **17**
bus ejus, et ignis ex ore nostrils, and from his
ejus consúmens, * car- mouth a devouring fire:
bónes ab eo succénsi. coals were kindled by him.

Et inclinávit cælos et And he lowered the heav-
descéndit, * et atrum ens and came down, and a
núbilum erat sub pédi- black cloud was under his
bus ejus. feet.

Et vectus est super Che- And he was borne upon
rub et volávit, * et fere- a cherub, and he flew, and
bátur super alas venti. he was carried on the wings
of the wind.

Induit ténebras ut ve- He put on darkness as his
laméntum, * ut tegu- covering, darksome waters
méntum aquam tene- and murky clouds like a
brósam, núbila densa. tent.

Ob fulgórem in conspé- Because of the brightness
ctu ejus * exarsérunt of his face, live coals were
carbónes igníti. kindled.

Et intónuit de cælo Dó- And the Lord thundered
minus, * et Altíssimus from heaven, and the Most
emísit vocem suam, High sent forth his voice.

Et misit sagíttas suas And he loosed his arrows
et dissipávit eos, * fúl- and scattered them, he
gura multa, et profligá- multiplied many thunder-
vit eos. bolts and he overthrew
them.

Et apparuérunt álvei And the beds of the waters
maris * et nudáta sunt came into view, and the
fundaménta orbis terrá- foundations of the world
rum were laid bare

Ab increpatióne Dómi- By the threat of the Lord,
ni, * a flatu spíritus iræ at the blast of the breath of
ejus. his wrath.

Why God delivered David:

Exténdit manum ex al- From on high he stretched
to, prehéndit me, * ex- his hand, he laid hold of **35**

Psalm tráxit me de aquis multis. me, he drew me out of many waters.

17 Erípuít me de inimíco meo fortíssimo, * et ab mightiest foe and from osóribus meis, qui erant them that hated me, and me validióres. were stronger than I.

19 Invadébant me die mihi funéstó, * sed Dóminus factus est præsidium mihi, They were falling upon me in the day of my misfortune, but the Lord became a strong tower to me.

20 Et edúxit me in campum spatiósum, * sal- And he led me forth into an open space, he saved me, vum me fecit, quia díligit me.— because he loves me.

To the pious, God shows favor and deals out mercy:

21 Repéndit mihi Dóminus secúndum justítiam meam, * secúndum puritátem mánuum meárum retribúit mihi, The Lord has dealt with me according to my justice, according to the cleanness of my hands he repaid me.

22 Quia custodívi vías Dómini * nec peccándo recéssi a Deo meo, For I have kept the ways of the Lord and have not departed from my God by sinning.

23 Quia ómnia mandáta ejus præ óculis hábui, * et præcépta ejus a me non remóvi, For I have had all his laws before my eyes, and I have not put his statutes away from me,

24 Sed fui ínteger coram eo, * et a culpa servávi me. But I have been blameless before him, and I have kept myself from guilt.

25 Et retribúit mihi Dóminus secúndum justítiam meam, * secúndum puritátem mánuum meárum coram óculis ejus. And the Lord has rewarded me according to my uprightness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.

36 Erga virum pium osténdis te pium, * erga íntest thyself holy, with the

grum integre agis, upright thou dost act up- *Psalm*
rightly,

Erga purum te mon- With the pure thou art **17**
stras purum, * erga ver- pure, and with the crafty
sutum te præbes pru- thou showest thyself pru-
dentem. dent.

Nam tu pópulum hú- For thou savest a humble
mulem salvum facis, * people, but thou strikest
óculos autem elátos af- down haughty eyes.
fligis.

Nam tu splendére facis For thou makest my light
lucérnam meam, Dómi- to shine, O Lord; my God,
ne; * Deus meus, illúmi- thou enlightenest my dark-
nas ténebras meas. ness!

Nam per te incúrro in For through thee I charge
turmas hostíles, * et per against hostile troops, and
Deum meum transilio through my God I leap the
murum. wall.

Dei via est íntegra, eló- The way of God is perfect,
quium Dómini igne pro- the word of the Lord is
bátum; * ipse clípeus proved by fire; he is a shield
est ómnibus confugién- for all who flee to him for
tibus ad eum. refuge.

Again David returns to what God has done for him:

Quisnam est deus præ- For who is a god save the
ter Dóminum? * aut quæ Lord? Or what rock is there
petra præter Deum no- save our God?
strum?

Deus, qui præcínxit me God it is who has girt me
fortitúdine * et fecit ín- with strength and has
tegram viam meam, made perfect my way;

Qui celeres fecit pedes Who has made my feet
meos ut pedes cervárum, swift as the feet of the hind,
* et super excélsa státuit and has set me on high
me, places,

Qui exércuit manus me- Who has trained my
as ad prœlium, * et ad hands for battle, and my
arcum árcum tendén- arms for bending the
dum bráccia mea.— brazen bow.

Psalm
17

- Et dedísti mihi clipeum tuum salvántem, et déxtera tua sustentávit me,* et sollicitúdo tua grándem me fecit.
- 37 Latam fecísti viam grésibus meis,* nec vacilláru(n)t pedes mei.
- 38 Insequébar inimícos meos et apprehendébam illos,* nec revertébar, donec conféceram eos.
- 39 Confrégi illos nec potuerunt surgere,* ceciderunt sub pedibus meis.—
- 40 Et præcinxísti me fortitúdine ad prælium,* et resístentes mihi sub me curvásti,
- 41 Et inimícos meos in fugam vertísti,* et, qui odérunt me, disperdidísti.
- 42 Clamavérunt — neque erat qui salvos fáceret;* ad Dóminum — neque eos audívit.
- 43 Et disjéci eos ut pulverem ante ventum,* ut lutum plateárum cóntudi eos.—
- 44 Eripuísti me de conténtiónibus pópuli,* caput natiónum me constituísti.
- And thou hast given me thy saving shield, and thy right hand has upheld me. And thy care has made me great.
- Thou hast made wide the way for my footsteps, and my feet have not faltered.
- I gave chase to my foes and I overtook them, nor did I turn back until I had slain them.
- I dashed them to pieces and they could not rise again, they fell under my feet.
- And thou hast girt me with strength for the battle, and thou hast bent under me those that withstood me.
- And thou hast put my foes to rout, and them that hated me thou hast scattered.
- They cried out—and there was none to save them unto the Lord—and he heard them not.
- And I scattered them like dust before the wind like dirt in the streets I trampled on them.
- Thou hast delivered me from the wranglings of the people, thou hast made me the head of the nations:

eram, servivit mihi, * served me, at the first word *Psalm*
d primum audítum heard it obeyed me;
bædívít mihi; 17

Alienígenæ blandíti Foreigners have flattered
unt mihi, ⁴⁶ alienígenæ me, the foreigners grew
alluérunt,*exiérunttre faint of heart, trembling
ientes ex árcibus suis.— they have left their strong-
holds.

David resolves to praise God among the Gentiles:

Vivat Dóminus, et be- The Lord live, and blessed
dicta sit Petra mea, * be my Rock, and may God
t láudibus extollátur my Saviour be glorified
Deus, salvátor meus, with praises!
Deus qui dedit ultiónem The God who has given
mihi * et pópulos mihi me vengeance, who has
subjécit; subjected the peoples unto
me;

Qui liberásti me ab ini- Thou who hast delivered
ciis meis, et super re- me from my foes, and hast
isténtes mihi extulísti set me over them that with-
me, * a viro violénto me stood me; thou hast saved
ripuísti. me from the man of vio-
lence.

Proptérea celebrábo te Therefore will I praise
in natió nibus, Dómine,* thee among the nations, O
t nómini tuo psalmum Lord, and sing a hymn to
icam: thy name:

Qui magnas victórias Thou who hast given vic-
edísti regi tuo et mise- tories to thy king, who hast
icordiam fecísti uncto shown mercy to thine
uo, * David et sémini anointed, to David and to
jus in ætérnum. his seed forever.

Commentary

[his psalm is said here, and in 2 Kings 22 (where the same
psalm appears), to have been composed by David on the
occasion of his successful escape from the persecution of Saul.
2-4: The psalmist expresses his grateful love of the Lord, his
refuge (Hebrew: "rock" and "fortress") and deliverer. Because
of this protection he will praise the Lord:
5-16: He describes graphically the extremities of the dan-

psalm
18 gers that surrounded him, and the marvelous appearance of the Lord through storm, thunder, and lightning, in answer to his prayer.

17-31: He tells how he was rescued because he had tried to live sinlessly in the way of God. For the Lord shows himself sincere with the sincere, but the perverse he entangles in their own evil schemes. So the humble are rescued through the destruction of the proud.

32-46: That is why the Lord saved the psalmist, giving him strength and protection in overcoming all his enemies.

47-51: The psalmist concludes with grateful praise of God the Saviour and Avenger of David, his anointed King.

Reflection

Besides prayers of adoration and petition, there are also prayers of thanksgiving. We should never fail to acknowledge God's favors to us. Our Lord complained of such neglect in the case of the ten lepers whom he had cleansed. Only one returned to Jesus to give thanks. (Luke 17, 13).

PSALM 18

Creation's Tribute

To Obtain Love for God's Law

The psalmist admires the glory of God in the heavens and in the Law. He manifests a great solicitude in the keeping of God's Law.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of David.

Wonderful revelation of God in nature:

- 2 **C**æli enarrant glóriam **T**he heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims the work of his hands.
 3 Dies diéi effúndit verbum, * et nox nocti tradit notitiam. Day unto day heralds the message, and night unto night makes it known.
 4 Non est verbum et non sunt sermónes, * quorum vox non percipiátur. There is no speech nor words, whose voice is not heard:

IN omnem terram exit Their sound goes forth *Psalms*
sonus eorum, * et usque unto all the earth, and **18**
ad fines orbis eloquia their strains unto the
eorum. farthest bounds of the
world.

Ibi posuit soli tabernaculum suum, « qui procedit ut sponsus de thalamo suo, * exultat ut gigas percurrens viam. There he has set his tabernacle for the sun, which like to the bridegroom coming out from the bridal chamber, he exults like a giant to run his course.

A termino cæli fit egressus ejus, et circuitus ejus usque ad terminum cæli, * nec quidquam subtrahitur ardori ejus.— His going forth is from one end of the heavens, and his circuit ends at the other, nor is there anything that can withdraw from his heat.

God's Law is also a manifestation of his glory:

Lex Domini perfecta, The law of the Lord is perfect, quickening the soul;
recreans animam; * the rule of the Lord is
prescriptum Domini firmum, instituens rudem; steadfast, giving wisdom to the lowly;

Præcepta Domini recta, The ordinances of the
delectantia cor; * mandatum Domini mundum, Lord are right, making
glad the heart; the teaching of the Lord is flawless,
illustrans oculos; giving light to the eyes;

Timor Domini purus, The fear of the Lord is
permanens in æternum; holy, abiding forever; the
* judicia Domini vera, judgments of the Lord are
justa omnia simul, true, they are all just,

Desiderabilia super aurum et obrizum multum * et dulciora melle et liquore favi.— They are more to be desired than gold, than much fine gold, and sweeter than honey, and the dripping honeycomb.

Etsi servus tuus atten- Although thy servant gives **41**

- Psalm* 18 dit illis, * in iis custodi- heed to them, although he
18 éndis sédulus est valde, is very careful in keeping
them,
13 Erráta tamen quis ani- Yet who can know his
madvértit? * a mihi faults? From my hidden
occúltis munda me. offenses cleanse me.
14 A supérbia quoque pró- From pride also keep thy
hibe servum tuum, * ne servant, lest it rule within
dominétur in me. me.
Tunc ínteger ero et Then shall I be whole, and
mundus * a delícto cleansed from a great sin.
grandi.—
15 Accépta sint elóquia May the words of my
oris mei et meditátio mouth and the thoughts of
cordis mei * coram te, my heart be accepted in thy
Dómine, Petra mea et sight, O Lord, my Rock and
Redémptor meus. my Redeemer!

Commentary

This psalm, Davidic according to its title, like psalm 8 praises God's glory as reflected in nature. The heavens speak of God to man in silent but clear and unmistakable languages (verse 5: "Their voice goes forth throughout the earth, and their words to the end of the earth" is applied by St. Paul to the preaching of the Gospel in Romans 10, 18).

6-7: Especially in the daily course of the sun in the heavens is God's glory revealed.

8-11: But greater than nature's revelation is the revelation of God's law to man; it is perfect, life-giving, trustworthy, granting wisdom to the simple, just, heart-rejoicing, pure, enlightening, holy, everlasting, true, more precious than gold, sweeter than honey, altogether just.

12-15: So the psalmist wishes to be free from all sins, conscious or unconscious, in order to be acceptable to the Lord,

Reflection

The atheist, if he would but look around the world, would see glimpses of God and of his attributes everywhere, in all that is good and beautiful and true. St. Paul told the Romans (1, 20): "For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes are clearly seen—his everlasting power also and divinity—being understood through the things that are made."

PSALM 19

Psalm
19

Invoking God's Blessings

To Obtain Grace in a Spiritual Conflict

A prayer for victory when the king is about to go forth to battle. He is confident of success because he has put his trust in God.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of Davidis.

The people pray for their king's success:

Exáudiat te Dóminus **M**ay the Lord hearken to thee in the day of trial, prótegat te nomen Dei may the name of the God of Jacob guard thee!

Mittat tibi auxiliium de Sancto, * et de Sion te susténtet. May he send thee help from the Sanctuary, and from Sion uphold thee!

Memor sit ómnium oblatiónum tuárum, * et holocáustum tuum hábeat gratum. May he be mindful of all thy offerings, and hold thy sacrifice to be pleasing!

Tribuat tibi quæ optat cor tuum * et impleat omne consilium tuum. May he give thee the things thy heart desires, and fulfill all thy counsel!

Lætémur de victória tua, et in nómine Dei nostri extollámus vexílla; * impleat Dóminus omnes petitiónes tuas!— May we rejoice in thy victory, and raise banners in the name of our God! May the Lord grant all thy requests!

The sacrifice has been accepted, and victory is pledged; a concluding prayer:

Jam novi Dóminum tribuisse victóriam uncto suo, * exaudisse eum de cælo sancto suo fortitúdine victrícis dexteræ suæ. Now I know that the Lord has given victory to his anointed one; that he has answered him from his holy heaven with the might of his victorious right hand.

Illi cúrribus et isti Those are strong in chari- 43

Psalm 20 equis, * nos autem nō-ots, these in horses, but we
mine Dómini, Dei nostri, in the name of the Lord our
fortes sumus. God.

- 9 Illi collápsi sunt et ce- They have given away and
cidérunt, * nos vero sta- have fallen down, but we
mus et permanémus.— hold firm and stand fast.
10 Dómine, victóriam trí- O Lord, give victory to the
bue regi * et exáudi nos, king, and hear us in the
quo die te invocámus. day that we call upon thee.

Commentary

This psalm is also attributed to David, though it seems to present a prayer of the people for the King on the eve of battle. It expresses the people's hope that the Lord, pleased by sacrifices offered in the Temple by the King, will give him victory from Sion.

7-9: The King then expresses his assurance that the Lord will grant victory, since he places his trust in him, not in his military might.

10: The people again pray for victory for the King.

Reflection

This psalm reminds us that God is as good as he is great, that his love is as ardent as it is true, that he is as lavish of his promises as he is faithful in keeping them.

PSALM 20

Gratitude

For Those Whose Prayers Have Been Answered

A prayer of thanksgiving for the victory given the king in battle. His heart overflows with gratitude as he recalls the great blessings the Lord has bestowed on him.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of Davidis.

The nation thanks God for the victory granted to their king.

- 2 Dómine, de poténtia **T**he king rejoices, O Lord
tua lætátur rex, * et **T**at thy power, and how
de auxilio tuo quam ve- greatly he exults at thy
heménter exsúltat! help!

- 44 Desidérium cordis ejus Thou hast given him the
tribuísti ei, * et petitió- desire of his heart, thou

nem labiŕum ejus non
denegásti.

Nam benedictiŕibus
faustis prævenísti eum,
* imposuísti cápiti ejus
rŕonam de auro puro.

Vitam pétiiit a te: tri-
buísti ei * longitúdinem
diérum in sœculum sœ-
culi.

Magna est glŕia ejus
auxilio tuo, * majestá-
tem et decŕem posuísti
super eum.

Etenim fecísti eum be-
nedictiŕem in sœcu-
lum, * lætificásti eum
gáudio in conspéctu tuo.

Nam rex confidit in
Dŕmino, * et propter
grátiam Altíssimi non
commovébatur.—

hast not withheld the re-
quest of his lips.

For thou camest to meet
him with choice blessings,
a crown of fine gold thou
hast placed on his head.

He sought life of thee:
thou hast given him length
of days for ever and ever.

Great is his glory because
of thy help, majesty and
splendor thou hast laid
upon him.

For thou hast made him
to be a blessing forever,
thou hast gladdened him
with joy in thy presence.

For the king puts his
trust in the Lord, and
through the favor of the
Most High he shall not be
shaken.

*A prophecy of the continuance of God's favors towards
the king, and the utter defeat of his foes:*

Supervéniait manus tua
omnibus inimícis tuis; *
délixera tua invéniait eos
qui te odérunt.

Pone eos ut in fornáce
ignis, * cum apparúerit
fácies tua.

Dŕminus in ira sua
consumat eos, * et ignis
devoret eos

Prolem eŕum perde de
terra, * et semen eŕum
e fíliis hŕminum.

May thy hand overtake all
thy foes; may thy right
hand find all them that
hate thee!

Put them as in a blazing
furnace, when thou ap-
pearest.

May the Lord destroy
them in his anger, and the
fire swallow them up!

Wipe out their race from
the earth, and their seed
from among the children
of men.

- Psalm* Si intentáverint in te If they have aimed evil at
 21 malum, * molíti sint do- thee, if they have plotted
 lum, non prævalébunt; they shall not prevail;
 13 Nam in fugam convér- For thou wilt put them to
 tes eos, * tendes arcum flight; thou wilt aim thy
 tuum in fáciem eórum. bow at their face.
 14 Exsúrge, Dómine, in Arise, O Lord, in thy
 poténtia tua! * canémus strength! We will sing and
 et celebrábimus fortitú- praise thy might.
 dinem tuam.

Commentary

This psalm, again Davidic according to the title, seems to be a companion to the preceding. It expresses gratitude that the King's prayers have been answered. He has received from the Lord his crown, long life, renown, splendor and continued favor.

9-14: So shall it be in the future, if the King trusts in the Lord. All foes will be completely destroyed by the might of the Lord.

Reflection

If as loyal subjects of our King, Christ, we suffer with him, we may rest assured that we shall share in his victory. In the words of St. Paul to the Romans (8, 17): "But if we are sons, we are heirs: also: heirs indeed of God and joint heirs of Christ provided, however, we suffer with him that we may also be glorified with him."

PSALM 21

The Passion

To Learn to Suffer with Christ

The sufferings of the Messiah. Christ prayed this psalm while suspended on the Cross. It foretells many details of his passion as well as the redemption wrought by it.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of Davidis. of David.

The pleading cry of the Messiah as the abandoned and persecuted servant of God:

46 **D**eus meus, Deus meus, **M**y God, my God, why
 quare me dereliqui- hast thou forsaker

sti? * Longe abes a prę-
clibus, a verbis clamoris
mel.

Dęus meus, clamo per
diem, et non exaudis, *
nocte, et non attendis
ad me.

Tu autem in sanctu-
rio hąbas, * laus Israęl.

In te speraverunt pa-
tres nostri, * sperave-
runt et liberasti eos;

Ad te clamaverunt et
salvi facti sunt, * in te
speraverunt et non sunt
confusi.

Ego autem sum vermis
et non homo, * oppro-
brium hominum et de-
spectio plebis.

Omnes videntes me de-
rident me, * diducunt
labia, agitant caput:

"Confidit in Domo:
liberet eum, * eripiat
eum, si diligit eum."

Tu utique duxisti me
inde ab utero; * securum
me fecisti ad ubera ma-
tris meę.

Tibi traditus sum inde
ab ortu, * ab utero ma-
tris meę Deus meus es
tu.

Ne longe steteris a me,

me? Thou art far from the *Psalms*
pleadings and the words of
my cry. 21

My God, I cry during the
day, and thou answerest
not, and in the night, and
thou heedest me not.

Yet thou, theme of Israel's
song, dwellest in thy holy
place.

In thee have our fathers
hoped: they trusted in thee,
and thou hast delivered
them;

They cried unto thee and
they were saved, they
trusted in thee and they
were not confounded.

But I am a worm and not
a man, the reproach of
men and the outcast of the
people.

All who see me laugh me
to scorn; they curl their
lips, they wag the head:

"He trusts in the Lord!
Let him save him, let him
deliver him, if he loves
him."

Thou indeed didst bring
me forth from the womb;
thou gavest me confidence
when I was upon my
mother's breasts.

To thee I was entrusted
even from my birth, from
my mother's womb thou
art my God.

Be not far from me, for I

Psalm quóniam tríbulor; * pro- am troubled; be thou near:
pe esto: quia non est because there is no helper.
21 adjutor.

A vivid description of the foes of the Messias and of their virulence:

- 13 Circúmant me júvén- Round about me are many
ci multi, * tauri Basan bulls, the strong bulls of
cingunt me. Basan hem me in.
- 14 Apériunt contra me os They open their mouth
suum, * sicut leo rapax against me, like a lion ra-
et rúgiens. vening and roaring.
- 15 Sicut aqua effúsus sum, I am poured out like
* et disjúnta sunt óm- water, and all my bones are
nia ossa mea: disjointed:
Factum est cor meum My heart has become like
tamquam cera, * liqué- wax, it melts in my bowels.
scit in viscéribus meis.
- 16 Aruit tamquam testa My throat is dried up
guttur meum, et lingua like a potsherd, and my
mea adhæret fáucibus tongue cleaves to my jaws;
meis, * et in púlverem thou hast brought me
mortis deduxísti me. down to the dust of death.
- 17 Etenim circúmant me For many dogs beset me, a
canes multi, * catérva band of evildoers prowls
male agéntium cingit around me.
me.
- Foderunt manus meas They have dug my hands;
et pedes meos, * ₁ dinu- and my feet, I can number
meráre possum ómnia all my bones.
ossa mea.
- Ipsi vero aspíciunt et But they watch me and
vidéntes me lætántur; seeing me, they rejoice:
19 dívidunt sibi induménta they divide my garments
mea, * et de veste mea among them, and for my
mittunt sortem. tunic they cast lots.
- 20 Tu autem, Dómine, ne But thou, O Lord, be not
longe stéteris: * auxili- far from me: thou who art
um meum, ad júvándum my strength, make haste to
48 me festína. help me.

Eripe a gládio animam meam, * et de manu canis vitam meam; Deliver my soul from the sword, and my life from the power of the dog; *Psalms* 21

Suddenly he is assured of deliverance:

Salva me ex ore leónis et me miserum a cornibus bubalorum. Save me from the lion's mouth, save me, wretched that I am, from the horns of the wild oxen.

The Messiah thanks God, his deliverer, and expresses the glorious results of his sufferings:

Enarrábo nomen tuum in atriis meis, * in medio cœtu laudábo te. I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the assembly of the people I will praise thee:

“Qui timétis Dóminum, laudáte eum; univérsum semen Jacob, celebráte eum: * timéte eum, omne semen Israël. “Praise the Lord, all ye that fear him; glorify him all ye sons of Jacob: revere him, all ye children of Israel.

Negue enim sprevit nec fastidivit misériam míseri; neque abscondit faciém suam ab eo * et, dum clamávit ad eum, audívit eum.” For he has not scorned nor shrunk from the suffering of the wretched man; neither has he hidden his face from him, and when the poor man cried to him, he answered.”

A te venit laudátio mea in cœtu magno, * vota mea reddam in conspectu timéntium eum. From thee comes my song of praise in the great assembly, and I will pay my vows in the sight of them that fear him.

Edent páuperes et saturabuntur, laudábunt Dóminum, qui quærunt eum: * “vivánt corda vestra in sæcula.”— The poor shall eat and be filled, they that seek the Lord shall praise him: “May your hearts live for ever!”

Recordabúntur et converténtur ad Dóminum * univérsi fines terræ; All the ends of the earth shall remember and shall turn again to the Lord,

- Psalm* Et procumbent in conspectu ejus * universæ nationes shall bow down in his sight,
 21 familiæ gentium,
 29 Quoniam Domini est For the kingdom is the regnum, * et ipse dominatur Lord's, and he rules among in gentibus. the nations.
 30 Eum solum adorabunt All that slumber in the omnes qui dormiunt in earth shall adore him terra, * coram eo curvabuntur omnes, qui descendunt in pulverem.— alone, before him shall bow down all that go down into the grave.
 Et anima mea ipsi vivet, * 31 semen meum my children shall serve ei, serve him;
 Narrabit de Domino generationi 32 venturæ, * et I shall speak of the Lord to the generation to come. annuntiabunt justitiam and they shall proclaim his ejus populo, qui nascetur: "Hæc fecit Dominus." justice to a people that shall be born: "These things the Lord has done."

Commentary

This psalm, though ascribed to David and capable in part of describing his sufferings, is recognized by the New Testament authors as descriptive of Christ's Passion. The sufferer complains that God seems to have forsaken him—to be deaf to his repeated cries of anguish (cf. Mt. 27, 46; Mark 15, 34, where our Lord makes the words his prayer on the cross).

4-6: Yet Israel has always praised God because he always delivered her in time of distress.

7-12: The sufferer vividly describes his condition: he is "a worm and not a man," despised and an outcast, derided and mocked, because he trusted in the Lord's love and protection (cf. Mt. 27, 43). This protection has been his from birth up to now.

13-22: Like savage bulls and lions his enemies attack, and he is as weak as water; his courage ("heart") melts like wax. They pierce (so the traditional and better translation) his hands and his feet; his bones can be counted. Seeing him doomed to death, his enemies divide his garments by lot among them (cf. John 19, 24). He begs for a speedy rescue.

23-27: The prayer is heard. The sufferer praises the Lord's mercy to the assembled people, who are sharing in his sacrifice of thanksgiving.

28-32: All nations shall remember what the Lord has done

and accept the Lord as their King. All men, being mortal, shall finally worship him. (The best interpretation of the Hebrew of verse 30 seems to be: "Him alone shall all who sleep in the earth worship; before him shall bow all those who go down to dust.") The psalmist himself will live for him (verse 31, following the Vulgate; the sense of the Hebrew is not clear) as will all his followers, and generations shall recall this great deed of the salvation of the Lord.

Psalm
22

Reflection

God became man and suffered in order to be a Man near to men, so that we might realize that we have a compassionate, understanding, human Saviour, one who, as St. Paul wrote in his epistle to the Hebrews, can have compassion on our infirmities, because in all things he was as we are with the exception of sin.

PSALM 22

God's Benefits

In the Presence of the Blessed Eucharist

The Lord as Shepherd and Host. A beautiful picture of the goodness of God as experienced by the psalmist. It inspires him with renewed confidence in God.

The Divine Shepherd:

¹ Psalmus. Davidis.

A psalm of David.

Dominus pascit me:
nihil mihi deest; *
in páscuis viréntibus cubare me facit.

The Lord is my shepherd:
I want for nothing; he
makes me to lie in green
pastures,

Ad aquas, ubi quiescam, condúcit me; *
réficit ánimam meam.

He leads me to waters
where I may rest; he restores my soul.

Dedúcit me per sémitas rectas * propter nomen suum.

He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

Etsi incédam in valle tenebrósa, * non timébo mala, quia tu mecum es.

Although I walk in a dark-some valley, I shall fear no evil, for thou art with me.

Virga tua et báculus tuus: * hæc me consolántur.—

Thy crook and thy staff: these comfort me.

Psalm

The Bountiful Host:

23

Paras mihi mensam * Thou preparest a table for
spectántibus adversáriis me before the eyes of my
meis; foes;

Inúngis óleo caput me- Thou anointest my head
um; * calix meus ubér- with oil; my cup brims over.
rimus est.

6 Benígnitas et grátia me Goodness and kindness
sequéntur * cunctis dié- will follow me all the days
bus vitæ meæ, of my life,

Et habitábo in domo And I shall dwell in the
Dómini * in longíssima house of the Lord days
tépóra. without end.

Commentary

David (so the title) gratefully pictures the Lord as a good shepherd, providing all his wants, guiding him to the richest pastures, and through the safest paths, protecting from danger, comforting always.

5-6: Then he pictures the Lord as a gracious and generous host, richly anointing him, giving lavishly to drink, following always with love, and allowing him ever to dwell with him.

Reflection

If at the sacred feasts of the Temple the pious Israelite could feel that God was his Host, how much more bountifully does he not entertain us at the banquet-table of his own Body and Blood!

PSALM 23

The Sanctuary

Thoughis on God's Sanctuary

A hymn for the installation of the Ark of the Covenant on Mount Sion. It declares that only the innocent can ascend with the Lord into his Holy Place.

The majesty of him who comes to take possession of his dwelling:

1 Davidis. Psalmus.

A psalm of David.

Dómini est terra et quæ **T**he earth is the Lord's
replent eam, * orbis and all its fulness, the
terrárum et qui hábi- world and they that dwell
tant in eo. therein.

- 2 Nam ipse super mária For he has founded it up— *Psalm.*
fundávit eum, * et super on the seas, and has made
flúmina firmávit eum.— it firm upon the waters. **23**

The conditions of approach to the Sanctuary:

- 3 Quis ascéndet in mon- Who can go up to the
tem Dómini, * aut quis mountain of the Lord or
stabit in loco sancto who shall stand in his holy
ejus? place?
4 Innocens mánibus et He that has clean hands
mundus corde, qui non and a pure heart, who does
inténdit mentem suam not set his mind on vain
ad vana, * nec cum dolo things, and has not sworn
jurávit próximo suo. deceitfully to his neighbor.
5 Hic accípiet benedicti- He shall receive a blessing
onem a Dómino * et mer- from the Lord and mercy
cédem a Deo Salvátore from God his Saviour.
suo.
6 Hæc est generátio quæ- This is the generation of
réntium eum, * quærén- them that seek him, of
tium fáciem Dei Jacob.— them that seek the face of
the God of Jacob.

*A summons to the gates of Jerusalem that they should
open to admit the King of glory:*

- 7 Attóllite, portæ, cápita Lift up your heads, O ye
vestra, et attóllite vos, gates; and be ye lifted up,
fores antíquæ, * ut in- ye ancient doors, that the
grediátur Rex glóriæ! King of glory may go in.
8 “Quis est iste Rex gló- “Who is this King of
riæ?” * “Dóminus fortis glory?”—“The Lord strong
et potens, Dóminus pot- and mighty, the Lord
ens in prœlio.” mighty in battle.”
9 Attóllite, portæ, cápita Lift up your heads, O ye
vestra, et attóllite vos, gates; and be ye lifted up,
fores antíquæ, * ut in- ye ancient doors, that the
grediátur Rex glóriæ! King of glory may go in!
10 “Quis est iste Rex gló- “Who is this King of
riæ?” * “Dóminus exer- glory?” — “The Lord of
cítuum: ipse est Rex hosts: he is the King of
glóriæ.” glory.”

Psalm

24

Commentary

This psalm (Davidic, according to the title) seems to be a hymn chanted as the Ark (the symbol of the throne of the Lord) was carried in procession into the Temple. The hymn is introduced by an antiphon proclaiming the Lord's dominion by right of creation over all the world and its inhabitants.

3-6: The singers then challenge those who would ascend with the procession to the Lord's Sanctuary. They must be clean of hand, pure of heart, free from all that is false. Such will be blessed by the Lord; such are sincerely desirous of meeting God.

7-10: Then, at the entrance of the Temple, a dialogue is chanted between the bearers of the Ark and those within. The former, twice demand that the gates be opened for the King of glory. The latter ask in each instance who this King is. To which the reply is given that it is the Lord, mighty, powerful in battle—"The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory!"

Reflection

The Ark was the symbol of the presence of God among his people, and the Israelites had the most profound reverence for it. The Catholic Church houses not merely an image of God, but our Lord himself in the Blessed Sacrament of his love.

PSALM 24

Petitions

To Obtain the Grace of Amendment

A prayer for protection and pardon. Conscious of his own weakness and sinfulness David puts his trust in God alone that he may be rescued from the violence of his enemies.

The psalmist asks for guidance and pardon:

1 Davidis.

A psalm of David.

Ad te attóllo ánimam
meam, * Dómine,
Deus meus.

To thee, do I lift up my
soul, O Lord, my God.

2 In te confido: ne confúndar!
* ne exsúltent de me inimíci mei!

In thee do I put my trust
let me not be put to shame!
Let not my foes exult over me!

3 Etenim unívérsi, qui sperant in te, non confundéntur;
* confundén-

For none that hopes in thee shall be confounded.
they shall be confounded

tur, qui fidem témere who wantonly break faith *Psalm*
frangunt. with thee.

4 Vias tuas, Dómine, O Lord, show me thy ways, **24**
osténde mihi * et sémitas tuas édoce me. and teach me thy paths.

6 Dírige me in veritáte Guide me in thy truth and
tua et doce me, quia tu teach me; for thou art God
es Deus salvátor meus: * my Saviour, and I hope in
et in te spero semper. thee always.

6 Reminiscere miseratió- Remember, O Lord, thy
num tuárum, Dómine, * acts of compassion and thy
et misericordiárum tuá- mercies that are from the
rum, quæ a sæculo sunt. beginning of the world.

7 Peccáta juventútis meæ Remember not the sins of
et delícta mea ne memí- my youth nor my offenses.
neris; secúndum miseri- According to thy mercy re-
córdiam tuam meménto member thou me, for thy
mei tu, * propter boni- goodness' sake, O Lord.
tátem tuam, Dómine.

Reflections on the nature of God:

8 Bonus et rectus est Dó- The Lord is good and
minus: * proptérea pec- righteous: therefore he
catóres édocet viam. teaches the way to sinners.

9 Dírigit húmiles in ju- He guides the lowly in
stítia, * docet húmiles holiness, he teaches his
viam suam. way to the meek.

10 Omnes sémitæ Dómini All the ways of the Lord
grátia et fidélitas * iis are kindness and faithful-
qui obsérvant fœdus et ness for them that keep his
præcépta ejus. covenant and his laws.

1 Propter nomen tuum, For thy name's sake, O
Dómine, * dimíttes pec- Lord, thou wilt forgive my
cátum meum: grande sin: for it is great.
est enim.

2 Quis est vir, qui timet Who is the man that fears
Dóminum? * docet eum, the Lord? He teaches him
quam viam éligat. what path to choose.

3 In bonis morábitur ip- He shall dwell in good **55**

- Psalm* 24 se, * et semen ejus possidebit terram. things, and his seed shall possess the land.
 24 Familiāris est Dóminus The Lord is friendly to them that fear him, and timéntibus eum, * et fœdus suum maniféstat eis. makes plain to them his covenant.
- 15 Oculi mei semper ad Dóminum, * quia ipse éruet de láqueo pedes meos. My eyes are ever towards the Lord, for he will pluck my feet out of the snare.

The psalmist renews his prayer for mercy and deliverance from his enemies:

- 16 Réspice in me et miserere mei, * nam solus et miser sum ego. Look thou upon me and have mercy on me, for I am lonely and poor.
- 17 Alleva angústias cordis mei, * et de anxietátibus meis érue me. Allay the grief of my heart and set me free from my worries.
- 18 Vide misériam meam et labórem meum, * et dímítte univérsa delícta mea. Behold my woe and my anguish, and forgive me all my sins.
- 19 Réspice inimícos meos: sunt enim multi, * et ódio violénto odérunt me. Look at my foes, for they are many and they hate me with a violent hatred.
- 20 Custódi ánimam meam et éripe me, * ne confúndar quod confúgi ad te. Keep thou my soul and deliver me, lest I be put to shame for having sought refuge in thee:
- 21 Innocéntia et próbitas me tueántur, * quóniam spero in te, Dómine. May innocence and goodness guard me, for I hope in thee, O Lord!
- 22 Líbera, Deus, Israël * ex ómnibus angústiis ejus. O God, set Israel free from all her straits!

Commentary

- 56 **D**avid (according to the title) here appeals for divine aid in the face of his enemies, invoking God's mercy and goodness to forget the sins of his youth.

8-15: He praises the Lord's kindness which instructs sinners and guides the meek. Kind and faithful is the Lord to those who abide by his law. He is asked, for his own sake, to forgive the psalmist's sin great though it be. The godfearing man is sure of the Lord's guidance and blessing. Psalm 25

16-22: The psalmist again prays to be delivered from his difficulties; and, considering his suffering, to be pardoned for his sin. He expects deliverance from his enemies for he has trusted in the Lord, and desires innocence and uprightness to be his guardians. The psalm closes with a prayer for Israel.

Reflection

Every morning we should devoutly ask God for his guidance during the day, and every evening before retiring we should seek his pardon on our knees for the offenses that we may have committed against his goodness.

PSALM 25

Innocence

Preparation for Holy Communion

The prayer of a just man. Lowly and poor, he is maltreated by the impious and bloodthirsty; yet he holds firmly to his piety in confidence that God will help him.

An appeal to the supreme justice, because he is innocent:

Davidis.

Of David.

Jus redde mihi, Dómine, quóniam ego ininnocéntia mea ambulávi,* et, in Dómino confisus, non vacillávi. **D**o me justice, O Lord, for I have walked in my innocence, and, having trusted in the Lord, I have not wavered.

Scrutáre me, Dómine, et proba me; * explóra renes meos et cor meum.— Search me, O Lord, and try me; test my reins and my heart.

Proofs of innocence in the past; his purpose for the future:

Nam benígnitas tua est ante óculos meos, * et ámbulo in veritate tua. For thy kindness is before mine eyes, and I walk in thy truth.

Non sédeo cum viris iníquis,* nec convénio cum deolóis. I do not sit with unjust men, nor do I go with deceivers.

Odi convéntum male I hate the company of 57

Psalm agéntium * et cum ím- them that do evil; nor do I
piis non consido. hold counsel with the
25 wicked.

6 Lavo in innocéntia ma- I wash my hands in inno-
nus meas * et circúmeo cence, and I walk around
altáre tuum, Dómine, thine altar, O Lord,

7 Ut palam annúntiem That I may proclaim thy
laudem * et enárrem praise, and recount all thy
univérsa mirabília tua. wondrous deeds.

8 Dómine, diligo habitá- O Lord, I love the abode
culum domus tuæ * et of thy house, and the
locum tabernáculi gló- place where thy glory
riæ tuæ.— dwells.

A prayer that God will save him from the fate of the wicked:

9 Noli auférre cum pec- Take not my soul away
catóribus ánimam me- with sinners, nor my life
am * et cum viris sán- with murderers,
guinum vitam meam,

10 In quorum mánibus In whose hands is crime.
scelus est, * et quorum and whose right hand is
délixtera plena est muné- filled with bribes.
ribus.

11 Ego autem in innocén- But I walk in my inno-
tia mea ámbulo: * réd- cence: redeem me and have
ime me et miserére mei. mercy on me.

12 Pes meus stat in via My foot stands in a level
plana, * in convéntibus way; in the assemblies I
benedícam Dómino. will bless the Lord.

Commentary

The psalmist (David in the title) pleads with the Lord to examine his case as a just Judge and to behold his innocence.

3-8: He protests that God's goodness and truth are the rule of his life and that he has had no part with the godless or hypocrites. Rather he washes his hands in token of his innocence and serves at the Lord's altar in the Temple. For he loves the beauty of the Lord's house where his glory dwells.

9-12: He then begs to be spared the fate of sinners, since he strives to walk in integrity and blesses the Lord in the assemblies of his people.

Reflection

Psalm

26

Christ taught us that there is no adversity, physical or moral, which cannot be transformed into a source of merit. When Paul prayed for deliverance from buffetings of the flesh, our Lord answered: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12, 6).

PSALM 26

Leaning on God

To Obtain Confidence in God

Complete trust in the Lord with a plea for mercy. David's heart is set on God alone, therefore he is without fear even in the gravest dangers.

Confidence in God:

Davidis.

Of David.

Dominus lux mea et salus mea: quem timebo? * Dominus praesidium vitae meae: a quo trepidabo?

The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?

Cum invadunt me maligni, ut edant carnem meam, * hostes mei et inimici mei, labuntur et cadunt.

When wicked men assail me, to devour my flesh, my enemies and my foes, they stumble and fall.

Si steterint adversum me castra, non timebit cor meum; * si surrexerit contra me bellum, ego confidam.

If an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; if war should break out against me, I will be confident.

Love for the Lord's dwelling place:

Unum peto a Domino; hoc requiro. * ut habitem in domo Domini cunctis diebus vitae meae,

One thing I ask of the Lord; this do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,

Ut fruar suavitate Dó-

To enjoy the sweetness of

Psalm mini, * et aspiciam templum ejus. the Lord, and to behold his temple;

26 Etenim abscondet me in tentório suo die malo, * occultabit me in abdito tabernaculi sui, in petram extollet me. For he will hide me in his tent on the evil day, in the secret of his tabernacle will he hide me, he will set me upon a rock.

6 Et nunc caput meum erigitur * super inimicos qui circumstant me. And now my head is raised up over the foes that surround me;

Et immolabo in tabernaculo ejus hostias exultationis, * cantabo et psallam Dómino. And I will offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of jubilation; I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

A prayer of anxious supplication:

7 Audi, Dómine, vocem meam qua clamo, * miserere mei et exaudi me. O Lord, hear my voice wherewith I cry, have mercy on me and hear me!

8 Tibi loquitur cor meum; te querit facies mea; * faciem tuam, Dómine, quero. My heart speaks to thee; my face seeks thee; thy face, O Lord, I seek.

9 Noli abscondere faciem tuam a me, * noli repellere in ira servum tuum. Hide not thy face from me, rebuff not thy servant in anger.

Auxilium meum es tu; ne abjeceris me, * ne dereliqueris me, Deus, salvator meus. Thou art my help; cast me not off, and abandon me not, O God, my Saviour

10 Si pater meus et mater mea dereliquerint me, * Dóminus tamen me suscipiet.— If my father and my mother should abandon me, yet the Lord will uphold me.

11 Doce me, Dómine, viam tuam, * et deduc me in semita plana propter adversarios meos. Teach me thy way, O Lord; lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

60 Ne tradideris me desiderio inimicorum meorum. Give me not up to the will of my foes, for false

rum, * quóniam insur- witnesses and men that *Psalm*
 rexérunt in me testes breathe violence have risen **27**
 mendâces et qui violén- up against me.
 tiam spirant.

Credo visûrum me bo- I believe I shall see the
 ua Dómini * in terra good things of the Lord in
 vivéntium. the land of the living.

Exspécta Dóminum, Expect the Lord, be
 esto fortis, * et roboré- strong, and be of stout
 tur cor tuum, et expsé- heart, and wait for the
 cta Dóminum. Lord.

Commentary

David (so the title) here expresses his assurance of the Lord's protection. To him the Lord is a light and a fortress. Evil men are powerless to harm him. So, though an army is encamped against him, he has no fear.

4-6: One thing he desires of the Lord, and that is to dwell always in the beauty of his sanctuary, and in time of trouble to be hidden there. Since the Lord saves him, he will offer a joyful sacrifice to the Lord.

7-10: His prayer then is for pity, since he is seeking the Lord as the Lord demands. He asks the Lord not to abandon him; and he is sure that the Lord would be the last to do this.

11-14: He also asks the Lord to teach him his ways, and to save him from his enemies. Then he will feel the favor of the Lord and be courageous in his trust.

Reflection

Our Lord once told the immense crowds who had gathered to hear him: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? And yet not one of them is forgotten before God. Yes, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore do not be afraid, you are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12, 6).

PSALM 27

Confidence

Pious Sentiments in Face of Enmity

A prayer against enemies, and thanksgiving. God answers David's prayer because he trusted in him. It occasions great joy in the heart of the psalmist.

Psalm
27

A prayer for rescue from danger, and for vengeance against enemies:

Davidis.

Of David.

Ad te, Dómine, clamo;
* Petra mea, ne sur-
dus fúeris mihi,

Unto thee I cry, O Lord;
my rock, be not deaf to
me,

Ne, si non audieris me,
similis fiam * descen-
déntibus in fóveam.

Lest, if thou hear me not,
I become like unto them
that go down into the pit.

2 Audi vocem obsecratió-
nis meæ, dum ad te clamo,
* dum attóllo manus
meas ad templum san-
ctum tuum.

Hearken to the voice of
my pleading, when I cry
unto thee, when I lift up
my hands to thy holy tem-
ple.

3 Noli me abrípere cum
peccatóribus * et cum
faciéntibus iniquitátem,

Drag me not away with
sinners and with evildoers.

Qui loquúntur pacem
cum próximis suis, * sed
malum in ánimo habent.

Who speak words of peace
to their neighbors, but have
evil in their hearts.

4 Da eis secúndum acta
eórum * et secúndum
malítiam facínorum ip-
sórum.

Reward them according to
their acts and according to
the malice of their deeds.

Secúndum opus mánu-
um eórum tríbue illis, *
facta eórum redde ipsis.

Render to them according
to the work of their hands
pay them their due.

5 Quia non atténdunt ad
acta Dómini et ad opus
mánuum ejus, * déstru-
at eos nec restítuat eos.—

Because they give no heed
to the acts of the Lord and
to the work of his hands, let
him destroy them and not
build them up again.

Thanksgiving for the hearing of the prayer:

6 Benedíctus Dóminus,
quia audívit vocem ob-
secratiónis meæ, * ; Dó-
minus, robur meum et
clípeus meus!

Blessed be the Lord, for he
has heard the voice of my
pleading. The Lord, my
strength and my shield!

62 In ipso confisum est
cor meum, et adjútus

In him my heart has
trusted, and I have been

sum; * ideo exsultat cor helped; therefore my heart *Psalm*
meum, et cántico meo rejoices, and I praise him
laudo eum.— with my song. **28**

Dóminus robur est pó- The Lord is the strength
pulo suo, * et præsidium of his people, and he is a
salútis uncto suo. stronghold of salvation for
his anointed.

Salvum fac pópulum Save thy people O Lord,
tuum, Dómine, et béne- and bless thine inherit-
dic hereditáti tuæ, * et ance, and feed them, and
pasce eos, et porta eos carry them forever.
usque in ætérnum.

Commentary

The psalmist (David, in the title) is in mortal danger; he lifts up his voice and hands to the Lord in the sanctuary. He begs to be spared the fate of the evildoers, the treacherous, and the godless, who deserve their fate.

6-9: He rejoices in the realization that his prayer is heard; the Lord is his strength, shield, and protection. So he trusts him: for the Lord is always the protector of his people and a stronghold of salvation to his anointed. May he always save, bless, shepherd, and support them.

Reflection

To David death meant the interruption of divine praise and companionship. For him loving intercourse with God could not continue in the underworld. We, for whom heaven has been opened by the Risen Christ, know that beyond the grave is a new and glorious life, the Beatific Vision.

PSALM 28

Omnipotence

To Obtain Protection in Storms

The glory of God in a storm. An invitation to glorify and adore God by contemplating his mighty works in the order of nature.

The angels are summoned to give glory to the Lord of the storm:

Psalmus. Davidis.

A psalm of David.

Tribúite Dómino, filii ive to the Lord, O sons
Dei, * tribúite Dómi- **G** of God, give to the Lord
no glóriam et poténtiam! glory and power!

Psalms 28 Tribúite Dómino glóri- Give to the Lord the glory
am nóminis ejus, * ado- of his name! Adore the
ráte Dóminum in ornátu Lord in holy array.
sacro.—

A description of the storm in its various phases:

- 3 Vox Dómini super The voice of the Lord is
aquas! Dcus majestátis above the waters! The God
intónuit: * Dóminus super of majesty has thundered
per aquas multas! the Lord is upon the many
waters!
- 4 Vox Dómini cum potén- Mighty is the voice of the
tia! * vox Dómini cum Lord! The voice of the Lord
magnificéntia! is in splendor!
- 5 Vox Dómini confríngit The voice of the Lord
cedros, * Dóminus con- breaks the cedars, the Lord
fríngit cedros Libani, breaks the cedars of Li-
banus.
- 6 Facit subsilíre, ut vítu- He makes Libanus to skip
lum, Libanum, * et Sá- like a calf, and Sarion like
rion, ut pullum bubaló- a young wild ox.
rum.
- 7 Vox Dómini élicit flam- The voice of the Lord call
mas ignis, * vox Dómini forth flames of fire. The
cóncutit desértum, * Dó- voice of the Lord shakes the
minus cóncutit desér- desert, the Lord shakes the
tum Cades. desert of Cades.
- 8 Vox Dómini contórquet The voice of the Lord
quercus et decórticat sil- twists the oaks and strips
vas: * et in templo ejus bare the forests: and in his
omnes dicunt: Glória!— temple all say: "Glory!"

*The storm passes, and the Lord of nature sits un-
troubled on his eternal throne:*

- 10 Dóminus super dilúvi- The Lord was seated above
um sedit, * et Dóminus the flood, and the Lord
sedébit rex in ætérnum. shall sit as king forever.
- 11 Dóminus fortitúdinem The Lord will give strength
pópulo suo dabit, * Dó- to his people; the Lord will
minus benedicet pópulo bless his people with peace.
suo cum pace.

Commentary

Psalm

David (so the title) here, as in psalms 8 and 18, sings of the glory of God as revealed in nature, calling upon all sons of God to praise and honor the Lord.

29

3-9: Then he asserts that God's voice is heard in the roaring of the ocean and in the thunder; the voice of the Lord shatters the strong Cedars of Libanus and makes Mounts Lebanon and Saron leap like frightened animals. (Verse 6 in the Hebrew: "He makes them (the cedars of Libanus) skip like a calf, and (the mountains of) Libanus and Saron skip like a young wild ox.") The voice of the Lord strikes out flames of fire, makes the very desert of Kadesh shake, twists the strong oaks (or "makes the frightened hinds calve") and strips the forest, and all in God's Temple exclaim "Glory."

10-11: The Lord reigns over the flood—this Lord who strengthens and blesses his people with peace.

Reflection

If we would seek a proof of the existence of God, we have but to look to nature. There his power and majesty are evident everywhere.

PSALM 29

Health Restored

For Those in Danger of Death

Thanksgiving for recovery from a severe illness. The psalmist was in great distress but through his prayer for mercy his sorrow has been turned into joy.

The title of the psalm:

Psalmus. Canticum festi dedicationis templi. Davidis.

A psalm of David. Song for the feast of the dedication of the temple.

Thanksgiving for deliverance from death:

Prædicabo te, Dómine, **I** will praise thee, O Lord, quóniam liberásti me, **I** for thou hast delivered me, and hast not made my * nec lætificásti de me * enemies to rejoice over me. inimicos meos.--

Dómine, Deus meus, * O Lord, my God, I have clamávi ad te, et sanásti me; cried to thee, and thou hast healed me.

Dómine, eduxisti ab inferis ánimam meam; * O Lord, thou hast brought forth my soul from the salvásti me ex descendentibus in fóveam. abode of the dead, thou hast saved me from them that go down into the pit.

Psalm Psállite Dómino, sancti Sing to the Lord, ye his
ejus; * et grátias ágite saints, and give thanks to
29 nómini sancto ejus. his holy name.

6 Nam mómento durat For his anger endures for
ira ejus, * per totam a moment, but his mercy
tam benevoléntia ejus. for a lifetime.

Véspere ádvenit fletus, Weeping comes in the
* et exsultátio mane.— evening, and gladness in
the morning.

Sickness was sent to punish self-confidence:

7 Ego autem dixi in con- But in my confidence I
fidentia mea: * “Non said: “I will never be
movébor in ætérnum.” moved.”

8 Dómine, in favóre tuo O Lord, in thy favor thou
præstitisti mihi honó- hast given me honor and
rem et poténtiam; * cum power; when thou didst
abscondisti fáciem tu- hide thy face, I became
am, factus sum contur- troubled.
bátus.—

David's plea that his life be spared, and its answer:

9 Ad te, Dómine, clamo, * To thee, O Lord, I cry and
et misericórdiam Dei mei I implore the mercy of my
implóro: God.

10 “Quid lucrí erit ex sán- “What profit will there be
guine meo, * ex descén- from my blood, from my
su meo in fóveam? going down into the pit?

An laudábit te pulvis, * Will dust praise thee,
aut prædicábit fidelitá- or proclaim thy faithful-
tem tuam?” ness?”

11 Audi, Dómine, et mise- Hear, O Lord, and have
rere mei; * Dómine, esto mercy on me; Lord, be my
adjutor meus.— helper!

12 Convertísti planctum Thou hast turned my
meum in chorúm mihi; mourning into dancing for
* solvistí saccum meum, me; thou hast loosed my
et cinxísti me lætítia: sackcloth, and thou hast
girt me with gladness.

66 Ut psallat tibi ánima To the end that my soul
mea nec táceat. * Dómi- may sing to thee and not

ne Deus meus, in ætér- be silent. O Lord, my God, *Psalm*
num laudábo te. I will praise thee forever. **30**

Commentary

In this psalm of David (according to the title) he gives thanks for an escape from illness which brought him to the brink of the grave. God's affliction of godly men is only passing, a moment of his displeasure in a lifetime of favor, like a sadness of an evening followed by joy in the morning.

7-13: The psalmist was afflicted because, when God gave him prosperity, he was overconfident. The Lord, therefore, turned away his face until the psalmist asked him what profit there would be in his death, and humbly begged the Lord for mercy and aid. Then the Lord turned his sorrow into joy. For this the psalmist praises and will praise the Lord forever.

Reflection

The sacrament of Extreme Unction helps the body as well as the soul. Through its grace a person critically ill is often restored to health, and thereby given an opportunity of doing penance for his past sins.

PSALM 30

Unbounded Confidence

For Those in Affliction and Humiliation

A prayer in time of great distress with expressions of confidence, petition, complaint and thanksgiving. David exhorts all holy souls to serve God with fidelity and loyalty.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of David.

A prayer of faith:

Ad te, Dómine, confú- **T**o thee, O Lord I flee for
gio: ne confundar in refuge: let me never be
æternum; * in justitia confounded; deliver me in
tua libera me! thy justice!

Inclína ad me aurem Bow down thy ear to me,
tuam, * festína, ut erí- make haste to rescue me!
pias me.

Esto mihi petra refúgii, Be a rock of refuge to me,
* arx munita, ut salves a fortified castle that thou
me. mayest save me.

Nam tu es petra mea et For thou art my rock and **67**

Psalm
30

arx mea, * et propter nomen tuum deduces me et diriges me. my fortress, and for thy name's sake thou wilt lead me and guide me.

5. Educes me e reti quod abscondérunt mihi, * quia tu es refúgium meum. Thou wilt bring me out of the snare which they have hidden for me, for thou art my refuge.

6. In manus tuas comméndo spíritum meum: * liberábis me, Dómine, Deus fidélis. Into thy hands I commend my spirit: thou wilt deliver me, O Lord, thou faithful God.

7. Odísti eos qui colunt idóla vana; * ego autem in Dómino confido. Thou hatest them that worship vain idols; but I trust in the Lord.

8. Exsultábo et lætabor de miseratióne tua, quóniam respexisti misériam meam, * adjuvísti in angústiiis ánimam meam, I will be glad and rejoice in thy compassion, for thou hast regarded my misery, thou hast helped my soul in distress.

9. Nec tradidísti me in manum inimíci, * sed statuísti in loco spatióso pedes meos. Thou hast not given me over into the power of the foe, but thou hast set my feet in a spacious place.

A pathetic description of the sufferings of the psalmist:

10. Miserére mei, Dómine, quia in angústiiis sum; * mæroré tabéscit óculus meus, ánimá mea et corpus meum. Have pity on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: mine eye wastes away with grief, my soul and my body.

11. Etenim ærúmna consumitur víta mea, * et anni mei gémitu. For my life is consumed with suffering, and my years with groaning.

Defécit in afflictióné robur meum, * et ossa mea tabuérunt. My strength has failed in affliction, and my bones have grown weak.

12. Omnibus inimícis meis factus sum oppróbrium, vicínis meis ludíbrum, I have become a reproach for all my enemies, a laughing-stock to my neighbors, and an object of

qui foris vident me, au- terror to my friends; they *Psalm*
fugiant a me; that see me in public flee **30**
from me.

Oblivióne éxcidi ex cor- I am clean forgotten out
de, quasi mórtuus, * fa- of mind, like one that is
ctus tamquam vas con- dead, I am become like a
fráctum. broken vessel.

Etenim audívi síbilum For I have heard the hiss-
multórum — terror est ing of the crowd — terror
úndique! * conveniéntes is everywhere! Assembling
simul contra me, vitam together against me, they
meam auferre meditáti planned to take away my
sunt. life.

Ego autem in te con- But I put my trust in thee,
fido, Dómine; * dico: O Lord; I say: Thou art
Deus meus es tu. my God!

In manu tua sortes In thy hand is my fate:
meæ: * éripe me de ma- deliver me out of the power
nu inimicórum meórum of my foes and from them
et a persequéntibus me. that persecute me!

Serénum præbe vultum Make thy face to shine
tuum servo tuo, * salva upon thy servant, save me
me in misericórdia tua. in thy mercy.

Dómine, ne confúndar, Let me not be confounded,
quia invocávi te; * con- O Lord, for I have called
fundántur ímpii, conti- upon thee; let the wicked
cúscant, acti ad ínferos. be confounded, let them be
silenced, driven to the
grave.

Muta fiant lábia men- Let lying lips be made
dacia, * quæ loquúntur dumb, which in pride and
contra justum insolén- scorn speak insultingly
ter in supérbia et con- against the just man.
témptu.

*The psalmist's prayers are answered; his sentiments of
deep gratitude:*

Quam magna est bóni- How great is thy good-
tas tua, Dómine, * quam ness, O Lord, which thou **69**

Psalm reservásti timéntibus te, has kept for them that fear thee,

30

Quam præstas confugiéntibus ad te,* in conspéctu hóminum. Which thou showest to them that flee to thee for refuge, in the sight of men.

21 Prótegis eos protectióne vultus tui * a conspiratióne virórum, Thou shieldest them with the protection of thy countenance from the plotting of men,

Occúltas eos in tentório * a júrgio linguárum. Thou hidest them in thy tent, from the wrangling of tongues.

22 Benedíctus Dóminus, quia miráblem præbuit mihi * misericórdiam suam in urbe munita. Blessed be the Lord, for he has shown his wonderful mercy toward me in a fortified city.

23 Ego autem dixi in trepidatióne mea: * "Abscíssus sum a conspéctu tuo": But I said in my dismay: "I am cast out from thy sight."

Tu vero audísti vocem obsecratiónis meæ,* cum clamárem ad te. But thou hast heard the voice of my prayer when I cried to thee.

24 Dilígite Dóminum, omnes sancti ejus! * fidéles conservat Dóminus, the faithful,

Sed retríbuít abundánter * agéntibus supérbe. But he fully requites them that act proudly.

25 Confortámini et robóretur cor vestrum * omnes, qui sperátis in Dómino. Take courage and let your heart be strengthened, all ye who hope in the Lord

Commentary

David (cf. the title) here calls trustingly upon the Lord for speedy aid. Endangered by secret snares, he looks to the Lord as his stronghold. He commends his spirit into the hand of the Lord, since the Lord has so often saved him. The Lord rejects the infidel but saves those who trust in him. So he sets the psalmist at liberty.

10-19: Then he describes his present pitiable state. Wasted by sorrow and suffering, a reproach to his enemies, a dread to

his friends, forgotten as if dead, mocked at, plotted against, he puts his trust in God and asks retribution. He asks that the light of the Lord's countenance shall shine upon him and expresses his faith that the Lord will frustrate the impious. *Psalm* **31**

20-25: The psalmist concludes with a hymn of gratitude or the Lord's goodness which shelters in wondrous ways the faithful who call on the Lord in time of tribulation. Such men can be courageous.

Reflection

We need, for the good of our souls, tears as well as smiles, storms as well as sunshine, the bracing effects of shocks and challenges, and crises that we must meet and surmount.

PSALM 31

Confession

Act of Thanksgiving After Confession

The joy of him whose sins have been forgiven. No sooner had David confessed his transgression than relief came from God. He exhorts the pious to seek God, with whom there is protection and rescue.

The happiness of him whose sins have been forgiven:

Davidis.

A didactic poem of David.

Beatus cujus remissa **B**lessed is he whose iniquitas, * cujus iniquity is forgiven, whose blatum est peccatum. sin is covered.

Beatus homo cui Domini **B**lessed the man to whom
us non imputat cul- God imputes not blame,
am, * et in cujus spiritu and in whose spirit there is
non est dolus. — not guile.

The psalmist's experience:

Quamdiu taciui, tabuerunt ossa mea * inter meos assiduos. As long as I was silent, my bones wasted away amid my continual groanings.

Etenim die noctuque For day and night thy
ravis erat super me hand was heavy upon me,
manus tua, * consume- my strength was burned
atur robur meum velut up as by the heats of sum-
ardoribus aestivis, mer.

Peccatum meum con- I have confessed my sin
fessus sum tibi, * et cul- to thee, and my fault I

Psalm pam meam non abs- have not concealed;
cóndi;

31

Dixi: "Confíteor iniqui- I said: "I confess my in-
tátem meam Dómino," * iquity to the Lord," and
et tu remisisti culpam thou didst forgive the guilt
peccáti mei. of my sin.

In trouble turn to God:

6 Propterea orábit ad te Wherefore every pious one
omnis pius * in témpore will pray to thee in time of
necessitátis. need.

Cum irruent aquæ mul- When the floods rush in,
tæ, * ad eum non per- they shall not come near
vénient. him.

7 Tu es refúgium mihi, Thou art a refuge to me;
ab angústis me servá- thou wilt keep me from
bis, * gáudio salútis meæ trouble, thou wilt surround
circúmdabis me.— me with the joy of my sal-
vation.

God's warning not to be like irrational animals:

8 Erúdiam te, et docébo I will instruct thee, and
viam, qua ámbules; * will teach the way by which
ínstruam te, firmans su- thou shouldst go; I will pre-
per te óculos meos. pare thee, keeping my eyes
fixed upon thee.

9 Nolíte esse sicut equus Be not like the horse
et mulus sine intelléctu, and the mule, which have
quorum ímpetus camo no understanding, whose
et freno constringitur; * eagerness is controlled
secus ad te non appro- with bit and bridle, other-
pquant.— wise they come not near
unto thee.

The source of happiness is hope in God:

10 Multi sunt dolóres ím- Many are the sorrows
pii; * sperántem autem of the wicked man; but
in Dómino misericórdia mercy encompasses him
circúmdat. that hopes in the Lord..

11 Lætámini in Dómino et Be glad in the Lord, and
gaudéte, iusti; * et exsul- rejoice, ye just; and exult
táte, omnes recti corde. all ye upright of heart!

Commentary

Psalm
32

David (so the title) pronounces the blessedness of those whose sin God has forgiven.

3-7: Before he himself penitently confessed his guilt, he knew no rest. He was like a plant dried up by summer drought. But when he acknowledged his sin, the Lord pardoned him. So it is with all who turn to the Lord; that is why the psalmist rejoices in the Lord's salvation.

8-9: Since the Lord is the only refuge for man in his troubles, the wise man should not wait to be forced like an animal to do the Lord's will.

10-11: For suffering is the lot of the wicked, while the loving mercy of the Lord protects the man who trusts him. So the upright man should rejoice in the Lord.

Reflection

God gave great consolation to penitent sinners when he spoke through his prophet Isaias (1, 18): "If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow: and if they be red as crimson, they shall be made white as wool."

PSALM 32

Divine Providence

Thanks for God's Help

A song of national thanksgiving for a deliverance from foreign invasion. God has defeated the plans of the heathen. Not in might of armies does victory lie; nothing avails but trust in God.

An invitation to praise the Lord, who is just and merciful:

Exultáte, justí, in Dómino: * rectos decet collaudátio. **R**ejoice in the Lord, O ye just: praise becomes the upright.

Celebráte Dóminum cíthara, * psaltério deca-chórdo psállite ei. Praise the Lord on the lyre, sing to him on the ten-stringed harp.

Cantáte ei cánticum novum, * bene cánite ei cum clangóre. Sing to him a new canticle, sing well to him with loud noise.

Nam rectum est verbum Dómini, * et omne opus ejus lídum. For the word of the Lord is right, and all his work trustworthy.

Diligit justítiam et jus: He loves justice and right; 73

Psalm * grátia Dómini plena the earth is full of the grace
est terra.— of the Lord.

32

*Reasons for praising God: His creative omnipotence
and his providence:*

- 6 Verbo Dómini cæli fa- By the word of the Lord
cti sunt, * et spirítu oris the heavens were made;
ejus omne agmen eórum. and all their hosts by the
breath of his mouth.
- 7 Cóngregat quasi in utre He gathers together the
aquas maris: * ponit in waters of the sea as in a
receptáculis fluctus.— vessel: he puts the waves in
storehouses.
- 8 Tímeat Dóminum om- Let all the earth fear the
nis terra: * ipsum vere- Lord: and let all inhabi-
ántur omnes incolæ or- tants of the world be in
bis. awe of him.
- 9 Nam ipse dixit et facta For he spoke, and they
sunt; * ipse mandávit et were made; he command-
exstítérunt. ed, and they came into be-
ing.
- 10 Dóminus díssipat con- The Lord brings to nought
sílíum natiónum; * írri- the counsel of the nation;
tas facit cogitatiónes po- he makes void the devices
pulórum. of the peoples.
- 11 Consílíum Dómini in The counsel of the
ætérnum manet: * cogi- Lord remains forever, the
tatiónes cordis ejus in thoughts of his heart to
generatióem et genera- generation after genera-
tióem. tion:
- 12 Beáta gens, cujus Deus Blessed is the nation
est Dóminus: * pópulus whose God is the Lord: the
quem elégit in hereditá- people he has chosen for
tem sibi. his inheritance.

*Another reason for praise: God's loving-kindness
towards Israel:*

- 13 De cælis réspicit Dómi- The Lord looks from the
nus: * videt omnes fílios heavens, he sees all the
hóminum. children of men;

74 De loco habitatióinis From the place of his hab

suæ prospèctat * omnes itation he gazes upon all *Psalm*
qui hábitant terram: that dwell on the earth: **32**

Qui ómnium eórum cor- He who has fashioned the
da finxit, * qui attendit hearts of all, who is watch-
ad ómnia ópera eórum.— ful of all their deeds.

Non vincit rex multo The king does not con-
exércitu: * bellátor non quer by a great army; the
se salvat magno róbre. warrior is not saved by
great strength.

Fallax est equus ad vi- Untrustworthy is the
ctóriam, * et magnitú- steed for victory, by his
dine róboris sui non sal- great power he is not saved.
vat.

Ecce óculi Dómini su- Behold the eyes of the
per tímèntes eum: * in Lord are on them that fear
eos qui sperant grátiam him, on them that hope for
ejus, his grace,

Ut éruat a morte áni- That he may deliver their
mas eórum * et alat eos souls from death, and feed
in fame.— them in famine.

A prayer of trust and hope in God:

Anima nostra expéctat Our soul waits for the
Dóminum: * adjútor et Lord: he is our helper and
clípeus noster ipse est. our shield;

In illo ergo lætátur cor Therefore in him our
nostrum, * in nómine heart rejoices, in his holy
sancto ejus confídimus. name we trust.

Fiat misericórdia tua, Let thy mercy, O Lord, be
Dómine, super nos, * upon us, according as we
quemádmódum sperá- hope in thee!
mus in te.

Commentary

This psalm is a hymn of thanksgiving ascribed to David, which seems to have been composed on the occasion of the deliverance of the nation from foreign aggression. The psalmist begins by calling upon all followers of the Lord to praise him with songs and harp, for the Lord is right and faithful, just and loving, lavish with mercy.

6-19: Then he praises the Lord's power as revealed in creation and in his eternal mastery over all nations. Not armies.

Psalm but the mercy of the Lord and his justice decides the fate of mankind.

33 20-22: So Israel turns to the Lord to shield her and ask his blessing in proportion to her hope.

Reflection

We should take heed, as Hugh of St. Victor says: lest God, who understands all our work-
(v. 14), behold in us works of worldly pleasure, works of self-indulgence, works of sin.

PSALM 33

Holy Fear

For Consolation of the Just in Affliction

The fear of God and its reward. David has been delivered from great affliction, and so he calls on others whom God has likewise favored to join in his thanksgiving.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Davidis, quando se mente Of David, when he feigned
alienatum simulavit coram madness before Abimelech and
Abimelech et, dimissus ab illo, being dismissed by him, went his
abiit. way.

An invitation to praise God's loving care for those who fear him:

- 2 **B**enedicam Dómino om- **I** will bless the Lord all
ni témpore; * semper the time; his praise will
laus ejus in ore meo. always be in my mouth.
3 In Dómino gloriétur Let my soul be glorified in
ánima mea: * áudiant the Lord: let the lowly hear
húmiles, et læténtur. and rejoice.
4 Magnificáte Dóminum Magnify the Lord with
mecum; * et extollámus me; together let us extol
nomen ejus simul.— his name.
5 Quæsívi Dóminum, et I sought the Lord, and he
exaudivit me; * et ex heard me; and he delivered
ómnibus tímóribus meis me from all my fears.
erípuit me.
6 Aspícite ad eum, ut ex- Look toward him, that
hilarémini, * et fácies you may be filled with joy,
vestræ ne erubéscant, and that your faces be not
covered with shame.

Ecce, miser clamávit, Behold, the unhappy man *Psalm*
 t Dóminus audívit, * et cried, and the Lord heard, **33**
 x ómnibus angústiis and rescued him from all
 jus salvávit eum. his straits.

Castra ponit ángelus The angel of the Lord en-
 domini * circa timentes camps round them that
 um, et éripit eos. fear him, and he rescues
 them.

Gustáte, et vidéte, quam Taste and see how good is
 bonus sit Dóminus; * the Lord; blessed is the
 ceátus vir qui cónfugit man who flees to him for
 ad eum. refuge.

Timéte Dóminum, san- Fear the Lord, O ye his
 tu ejus, * quia non est saints, for they that fear
 nópia timéntibus eum. him know no want.

Poténtes facti sunt páu- The powerful have become
 ueres et esuriérunt; * poor and have hungered;
 uaréntes autem Dómi- but they that seek the Lord
 um nullo bono caré- shall lack no good thing.
 unt.

The fear of God and its blessings:

Veníte, filii, audíte me; Come, children, hearken
 timórem Dómini docé- to me; I will teach you the
 o vos. fear of the Lord.

Quis est homo qui díli- Who is the man that loves
 it vitam, * desíderat life, who desires length of
 ies, ut bonis fruátur? days in order to enjoy good
 things?

Cóhibe linguam tuam Keep thy tongue from evil,
 malo, * et lábia tua a and thy lips from words of
 erbis dolósís. deceit.

Recède a malo, et fac Forsake evil and do good,
 onum; * quare pacem, seek after peace, and pur-
 t sectáre eam. sue it.

Oculi Dómini respíci- The eyes of the Lord look
 nt justos, * et aures upon the just, and his ears
 jus clamórem eórum. are open to their cry.

Vultus Dómini aversá- The face of the Lord is
 ur faciéntes mala, * ut turned against them that

- Psalm* 33 déleat de terra memóri- do evil things, to cut off the
am eórum. remembrance of them from
the earth.
- 18 Clamavérunt iusti, et The just cried, and the
Dóminus exaudivit eos; Lord heard them; and he
* et ex ómnibus angú- delivered them out of all
stiis eórum erípuit eos. their distresses.
- 19 Prope est Dóminus con- The Lord is near to the
trítis corde, * et confrá- contrite of heart, he saves
ctos spiritu salvat. the crushed in spirit.
- 20 Multa sunt mala iusti; Many are the trials of the
* sed ex ómnibus éripit just man; but the Lord de-
eum Dóminus. livers him from them all.
- 21 Custódit ómnia ossa The Lord watches over all
ejus: * non confringétur his bones: not even one of
ne unum quidem. them shall be broken.
- 22 In mortem agit ímpium Malice drives the wicked
malítia, * et qui odérunt man to death, and they
justum, puniéntur. that hate the just man
shall be punished.
- 23 Dóminus liberat áni- The Lord delivers the
mas servórum suórum, souls of his servants, and
* neque puniétur, qui- whoever flees to him for
cúmque confúgerit ad refuge shall not be pun-
eum. ished.

Commentary

This psalm is ascribed to David's authorship on the occasion described in 1 Kings, 21, 10 ff. The psalmist invites all to join in his hymn of thanksgiving.

5-11: The Lord has answered the psalmist's prayer for help as he will ever answer the poor and godfearing. Such will experience his sweet providence.

12-23: He teaches them how to lead godfearing and happy lives. Guiltlessness in speech and gentleness in action will ensure the Lord's blessing and protection in all the tribulations and dangers of those who serve and trust him.

Reflection

To each of us God gives a Guardian Angel, who helps us overcome our temptations, and carries our petitions to God even as the angels whom

PSALM 34

Psalm

34

Prayer in Persecution

For Those Who Suffer from False Accusations

An appeal to God against unjust and malicious foes. God must take up David's cause, show that he is innocent, and turn back the hostile scheming of his foes upon themselves.

An earnest prayer for God's assistance against cruel foes:

Davidis.

Of David.

Verta, Dómine, contra
certántes mecum, *
mpúgna impugnántes
ne.

Apprehénde clipeum et
cutum, * et exsúrge in
uxílium meum.

Vibra lanceam et cóhi-
e persequéntes me, *
ic ánimæ meæ: "Salus
ua ego sum."

Confundántur et eru-
éscant qui quærun't vi-
am meam, * cedant re-
rórsum et afficiántur
udóre qui cógitant mi-
i mala.

Sint velut pálea ante
entum, * cum ángelus
Dómini pellet eos.

Sit via illórum tene-
rósá et líbrica, * cum
ángelus Dómini insectá-
itur eos.—

Strive against them, O
Lord, that strive against
me, make war on them that
make war on me.

Seize buckler and shield,
and rise up to help me.

Draw the spear and bar
the way to them that pur-
sue me, say to my soul: "I
am thy salvation."

May they be confounded
and ashamed that seek my
life, may they fall back and
be abashed that devise evils
against me.

May they be like chaff be-
fore the wind, when the
angel of the Lord shall
drive them back.

Dark and slippery be their
way, when the angel of the
Lord shall pursue them.

Persecution of the psalmist:

Nam sine causa teten-
lerunt mihi rete suum,
sine causa fodérunt
óveam vitæ meæ.

For without cause they
did spread their net for me,
and without cause dug a
pit for my life.

Véniat illis intéritus

May death fall upon them

Psalm 34 *improvisó, et rete, quod unawares, may the net*
tetendérunt, cápiat ip- *they spread catch them-*
*sos; * in foveam quam* *selves, may they fall into*
foderunt, ipsi cadant. *the pit they themselves*
dug.

9 *Anima autem mea ex-* *But my soul shall rejoice*
*sultábit in Dómino, ** *in the Lord, and shall be*
lætábitur de auxilio ejus. *glad because of his help.*

10 *Omnes vires meæ di-* *All the powers of my being*
*cent: * "Dómine, quis* *shall say: "O Lord, who is*
símilis tibi, *like unto thee,*

Qui éripis míserum a *Thou who savest the af-*
*præpoténte, * míserum* *flicted man from the pow-*
et páuperem a præda- *erful one, the afflicted and*
tóre." *the poor from the spoiler.'*

11 *Surrexérunt testes vio-* *Violent witnesses rose up*
*lénti: * quorum non* *they kept questioning me*
eram cóncius, a me *as to things I know not.*
quærébant.

12 *Retribuébant mihi ma-* *They kept requiting me*
*la pro bonis: * desola-* *with evil for good: to the*
tiónem ánimæ meæ.— *desolation of my soul.*

The ingratitude of the psalmist's enemies:

13 *Ego autem, cum illi* *But, when they were sick*
ægotárent, induébar ci- *did I put on haircloth, and*
lício, affligébam jejúnio *with fasting did humble*
*ánimam meam * et pre-* *my soul, and poured out*
ces intra me fundébam. *prayers within me.*

14 *Velut pro amico, pro* *As for a friend, for my*
fratre meo, incedébam *brother, I walked in sor-*
*tristis, * velut qui luget* *row, as one who mourns*
matrem, mæstus incur- *mother, I was bent with*
vábar. *grief.*

15 *Sed cum vacillárem* *But in my adversity, they*
ego, lætáti sunt et con- *rejoiced and came together*
*venérunt, * convenérunt* *they came together against*
contra me percutiéntes *me, smiting me, I know not*
inopinántem. *why.*

80 *Dilaniábant me neque* *They slandered me with*

cessábant, ¹⁶ tentábant out ceasing, they assailed *Psalm*
me, irridébant mihi * me, they mocked me, **34**
frendéntes contra me they gnashed their teeth
déntibus suis.— against me.

A renewed prayer in a calmer tone:

Dómine, quámdiu aspí- O Lord, how long wilt
cies? * Eripe ánimam thou look on? Snatch thou
meam a rugiéntibus, a my soul from their roar-
leónibus vitam meam. ings, my life from the lions.
Grátias agam tibi in I will give thanks to thee
cœtu magno, * in pópu- in the great assembly, I will
lo multo te laudábo. praise thee in the great
multitude.

Ne gaudeant de me ini- Let them not make merry
míci mei injústi; * ne over me, they that wrong-
óculis ánuant qui me fully assail me; nor let
odérunt sine causa. them mock me with their
eye that hate me without
cause,

Neque enim quæ pacis For neither do they speak
sunt loquúntur,* et con- words of peace, and they
tra quiétos terræ frau- plan treacherous deeds
des meditántur. against the peaceful of the
land.

Et dilátant contra me And they open their
os suum,* dicunt: "Vah! mouths against me, say-
Vah! óculis nostris vidi- ing: "Aha, aha! With our
mus!"— eyes we have seen!"

Vidisti, Dómine! Noli Thou hast seen, O Lord!
silére, * Dómine, noli es- be not silent, Lord, be not
se procul a me! far from me!

Expergiscere et evígila Bestir thyself and be
ad defensiónem meam, watchful in my defense,
* Deus meus et Dóminus my God and my Lord, for
meus, pro causa mea! my sake!

Júdica me secúndum Judge me according to
justítiam tuam, Dómi- thy justice, O Lord; my
ne; * Deus meus, ne læ- God, let them not rejoice
téntur de me! over me!

- Psalm* Ne cōgitent in corde Let them not say in their
 suo: "Vah! Quod deside- hearts: "Aha, just what we
 34 rāvimus!" * ne dicant: wanted!" Let them not
 "Devorāvimus eum."— say: "We have swallowed
 him up!"
- 26 Confundāntur et eru- Let them be confounded
 bēscant omnes simul, * and blush for shame, all of
 qui lætāntur de malis them together, who rejoice
 meis; in my woes;
 Induāntur confusiōne Let them be covered with
 et ignominia, * qui se confusion and dishonor.
 extollunt contra me. they that rise up against
 me!
- 27 Exsultent et lætēntur Let them rejoice and be
 qui favent causæ meæ, * glad that favor my cause,
 et dicant semper: and let them say always:
 "Magnificetur Dōmi- "The Lord be praised, who
 nus, * qui favet salūti favors the salvation of his
 servi sui." servant."
- 28 Et lingua mea enun- And my tongue shall pro-
 tiābit justitiam tuam, * claim thy justice and thy
 perpétuo laudem tuam. praise forever.

Commentary

David (cf. the title) calls upon the Lord to arm himself as a warrior to scatter as chaff the evil enemy who threatens ruin.

7-16: He describes more fully the enemy who are falsely accusing him, though he has always shown sympathy to them in their grief. Now in his trouble they turn viciously against him.

17-28: If the Lord will rescue him from their malice, he will publicly sing his praises. The Lord cannot allow these evil men to triumph; otherwise they will think they have triumphed over his justice. If the Lord vindicates the psalmist, all good men will rejoice and the psalmist will ever praise his justice.

Reflection

Christ's law of charity is unlike the old Jewish law of retaliation. He taught us the law of pardon in his first word on the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23, 34).

PSALM 35

Psal
35

Praise of God's Mercy

For Those Inclined to Pride

The conduct of the wicked as contrasted with the inexhaustible loving-kindness of God. However shrewd the planning of the godless, it is futile against the grace and mercy of God.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Davidis, servi Domini.

For the choir-master. A psalm of David, the servant of the Lord.

The principles and conduct of the wicked:

Lóquitur iniquitas ad
impium in corde ejus;
* non est timor Dei ante
oculos ejus.

Sin speaks to the wicked
man in his heart; the
fear of God is not before his
eyes.

Etenim in mente sua
blanditur sibi * non de-
prehendi culpam suam
neque abhorreri.

For in his mind he flatters
himself that his fault is not
found out nor abhorred.

Verba oris ejus iniqui-
tas et dolus, * desiit sa-
pere et agere bene.

The words of his mouth
are sin and deceit, he has
ceased to know and to do
the good.

Iniquitatem meditatur
in cubili suo, * consistit
in via non bona, malum
non aversatur.—

He devises iniquity upon
his bed. He is steadfast in
a way that is not good; he
does not hate evil.

God's goodness towards all creatures, and especially the just:

Dómine, cælum contín-
git misericórdia tua, *
fidélitas tua ipsas nubes.

O Lord, thy mercy reaches
unto heaven, thy faithful-
ness unto the clouds.

Justitia tua sicut mon-
tes Dei, júdicia tua sicut
mare profúndum: * hó-
mines et juménta sal-
vas, Dómine.

Thy justice is as the
mountains of God, thy
judgments are as the deep
sea: Thou savest men and
beasts, O Lord.

Quam pretiósá est grá-
tia tua, Deus: * filii hó-

How precious is thy mercy,
O God: the children of men

Psalm 35 minum sub umbram alá- take refuge under the shade
rum tuárum confúgi- ow of thy wings;
unt;

9 Satiántur pinguédine They are filled with the
domus tuæ, * et torrén- bounteousness of thy
deliciárum tuárum potas house, and thou givest
eos. them to drink of the tor-
rent of thy delights.

10 Etenim apud te est fons For with thee is the foun-
vitæ, * et in lúmine tuo tain of life, and in thy
vidémus lumen.— light we see light.

*A prayer for the continuance of God's loving-kindness
and for protection from the wicked:*

11 Serva grátiam tuam iis Maintain thy favor to
qui te colunt, * et æqui- them that worship thee,
tátem tuam iis qui recto and thy justice to all who
sunt corde. are of right heart.

12 Ne supervénia- mihi Let not the foot of the
pes supérbi, * et manus proud man tread upon me,
peccatóris ne móveat nor the hand of the sinner
me. move me.

13 Ecce corruérunt qui pa- Behold they that do evil
trant iniquitátem: * de- have fallen: they are over-
jécti sunt nec súrgere thrown and cannot rise.
possunt.

Commentary

David (so the title) here condemns the extremes to which
wicked and godless men will go.

6-10: To them he contrasts the limitless love, fidelity and
justice of the Lord, who shows mercy in so many ways to the
who take shelter under his wings. Such men are ever sat-
isfied from the lifegiving streams of the Lord's favor and enjoy
the light of the Lord's grace.

11-13: So the psalmist prays that the Lord in his mercy will
continue to preserve him from the influence of evil men.

Reflection

We must never be guilty of the sin of presump-
tion; yet we know that God wills the salva-
tion of all men. His love and kindness reach
beyond the skies and the sea. They embrace all
time, stretching from eternity to eternity.

PSALM 36

Divine Retribution

Against Impatience in Trials

Psalms
36

The prosperity of the godless is fleeting while enduring happiness is in store for the just. The upright are cautioned against the infatuation of worldly pleasures.

Counsel to avoid murmuring, and trust in God:

Davidis.

Of David.

Noli excandescere propter male agéntes, * neque invidére faciéntibus iniquitátem;

Be not angry because of evildoers, nor envious of them that work iniquity;

Nam sicut fœnum velociter décidit * et sicut herba viridis marcéscunt.

For like grass they will soon wither and like green herbs they will fade.

Spera in Dómino, et fac bonum, * ut hábites terram et fruáris securitáte.

Hope in the Lord and do good, that thou mayest dwell in the land and enjoy safety.

Delectáre in Dómino, * et dabit tibi quod petit cor tuum.

Delight in the Lord, and he will give thee what thy heart seeks.

Commítte Dómino viam tuam, * et spera in eo, et ipseaget.

Commit thy way to the Lord, and hope in him, and he will bring it to pass.

Et oriri faciet sicut lumen justítiam tuam, * et jus tuum sicut merídiem.

And he will make thy justice rise like the light, and thy cause like the noonday.

Acquiesce in Dómino, * et spera in eo.

Rest in the Lord, and hope in him,

Noli excandescere de eo qui prospere procédit in via sua, * propter hóminem machinántem mala.

Be not angered in regard to him that prospers in his way, of the man who devises evil things.

Desiste ab ira et depóne furórem; * noli excandescere, ne male agas.

Cease from anger and put away wrath; be not angered, lest thou do evil.

Psalms Etenim male agéntes For evildoers shall be de-
 36 destruéntur; * sed qui stroyed; but they that hope
 sperant in Dómino, pos- in God shall possess the
 sidébunt terram. land.

10 Et módicum, et non erit And a little while, and the
 ímpius; * et si attédes wicked man shall be no
 ad locum ejus, jam non more; and if thou look for
 erit. his place, it shall no longer
 be.

11 Sed mansuéli possidé- But the meek shall posses-
 bunt terram, * et delecta- the land, and shall delight
 buntur multitudine pa- in abundance of peace.
 cis.

The prosperity of the wicked is shortlived:

12 Mala molitur ímpius The wicked man makes
 justo * et frendit contra plots against the just man,
 eum déntibus suis. and gnashes his teeth at
 him.

13 Dóminus irrídet illi, * God laughs at him, for he
 quia videt diem ejus ven- sees that his day is near.
 túrurum.

14 Gládium eváginant ím- The wicked draw the
 pii et tendunt arcum sword, and bend the bow
 suum, ut prostérnant to strike down the afflicted
 míserum et páuperem, * and the poor, to slay them
 ut trucidet eos qui re- that walk in the right path.
 cta via incédunt.

15 Gládus eórum pene- Their sword shall pierce
 trábit in corda ipsórum, their own hearts, and their
 * et arcus eórum con- bows shall be broken.
 fringéntur.

16 Mélius est módicum, Better is the little of the
 quod habet justus, * righteous than the great
 quam opuléntia impió- wealth of sinners;
 rum magna;

17 Nam brácchia impió- For the arms of the wicked
 rum confringéntur, * shall be broken, but the
 justos autem susténtat Lord upholds the just.

Dóminus curat de vita probórum, * et heréditas eórum in ætérnum erit. The Lord has care for the life of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. *Psalms* **36**

Non confundéntur témpore calamitátis, * et diébus famis saturabúntur. They shall not be confounded in the time of disaster, and in the days of famine they shall be filled.

Impii vero peribunt, et inimici Dómini ut decor pratórum marcéscent, * quemádmóu fúmus evanéscent. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of God shall wither away like the beauty of the meadows, like smoke they shall vanish.

The reward of the just is certain and lasting:

Mutuátur ímpius et non reddit, * justus autem miserétur et donat. The wicked man borrows and does not repay, but the just man feels pity and gives.

Nam, quibus benedixérít, possidébunt terram, * et quibus maledíxérít, destruéntur. For those whom he has blessed shall possess the land, and those whom he has cursed shall be destroyed.

A Dómino gressus hóminis firmántur, * et viam ejus accéptam habet. A man's steps are made firm by the Lord, and he approves his way.

Etsi cecíderít, non prostérnitur, * quia Dóminus sústinét manum ejus. Although he falls, he is not utterly cast down, for the Lord holds his hand.

Puer fui, et jam sum senex, et non vidi justum derelictum, * nec semen ejus mendicans panem. I was a boy and now am an old man, and I have not seen the just man forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Omni témpore miserétur et cómodat; * et sémini illíus benedicétur. At all times he feels pity and he lends; and his seed shall be blessed.

Psalm Recede a malo, et fac bonum, * ut maneas in sempiternum. Turn from evil, and do good, that thou mayest abide forever.

36

- 28 Nam Dominus diligit justitiam, * et non derelinquit sanctos suos; For God loves justice, and he does not abandon his saints;
Improbi destruuntur, * et semen impiorum excindetur. The wicked shall be destroyed and the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.
- 29 Justi possidebunt terram, * et habitabunt in sempiternum super eam. The just shall possess the land and shall dwell there in for evermore.
- * 30 Os justi eloquitur sapientiam, * et lingua ejus effatur rectum. The mouth of the just man utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is right.
- 31 Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius, * et non vacillant gressus ejus. The law of his God is in his heart, and his steps do not falter.

The final contrast between the just and the wicked:

- 32 Observat impius justum, * et studet occidere eum. The wicked man spies on the just man and seeks to kill him.
- 33 Dominus non derelinquet eum in manu illius, * nec condemnabit eum, cum judicabitur. The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor will he condemn him when he shall be judged.
- 34 Confide in Domino, * et viam ejus observa; Trust in the Lord, and keep his way;
Et provehet te, ut possideas terram; * excidium impiorum lætus videbis. And he will exalt thee so that thou shalt possess the land; joyful, thou shalt see the destruction of the godless.
- 35 Vidi impium superbum, * et sese expandentem ut cedrum frondosam. I saw an ungodly man in his haughtiness and spreading himself out like a flourishing cedar.

38 Et præterii, et ecce non And I passed by, and lo, he

erat; * et quæsiui eum, was not; and I sought him, *Psalm*
et non est inuentus. and he was not found.

Obsérva probum et con- Mark the upright man
sidera iustum: * nam and consider the just man:
postéritas est viro paci- for to the man of peace be-
fico. longs progeny.

Peccatóres autem ex- But sinners shall all be
stirpabúntur omnes, * wiped out, the progeny of
postéritas impiórum ex- the wicked shall be cut off.
scindétur.

Salus justórum a Dó- The salvation of the just
mino est; * refúgium eó- is from the Lord; he is their
rum est témpore tribu- refuge in time of trouble.
lationis.

Et áduvat eos Dómi- And the Lord helps them
nus et liberat eos; * lí- and delivers them; he frees
berat eos ab impiis, et them from the wicked, and
seruat eos, quia confú- saves them, because they
giunt ad eum. flee to him for refuge.

Commentary

The psalmist (David in the title) here wrestles with the question as to why the Lord allows the wicked to prosper. The author begins by warning the just man not to be disturbed when he sees the sinner prosper. His prosperity is shortlived, while the just man will be rewarded for his trust in the Lord. The meek will inherit the land of the worker of evil.

12-24: The wicked seem successful in their plots against the innocent, but the Lord watches and eventually turns evil back on the evil man, destroying him, and making sure that in the end the just man is established.

25-40: The psalmist in his old age realizes that the just and tried man is always eventually blest. So he warns again that evil must be shunned. The wicked and their plans will perish, and the just, through the Lord's sure justice, will come into a perpetual inheritance.

Reflection

This psalm has been called "An Antidote to Murmuring." We must always trust in God, who in the end will make everything right, and who will destroy the wicked and reward the just.

A Prayer for Help to Accept Divine Chastisement

A penitential prayer of a sick person. Acknowledging his grievous afflictions as just punishment for his wickedness, David with sincere contrition puts his trust in God.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Psalmus. Davidis. Ad com- A psalm of David. For a re-
memorandum. membrance.

Confession with a plea for mercy:

- 2 **D**ómine, noli me argú- **R**e buke me not, O Lord, in
ere in ira tua * nec thy wrath, nor chastise
me corripere in furóre me in thy fury.
tuo.

- 3 Etenim sagittæ tuæ in- For thy arrows are fast-
fixæ sunt mihi, * et de- ened in me, and thy hand
scéndit super me manus has fallen upon me.
tua.

- 4 Nihil sani est in carne There is no health in my
mea ob indignatióem body because of thy indig-
tuam, * nihil íntegri in nation, there is no sound-
óssibus meis propter ness in my bones because
peccátum meum. of my sin.

- 5 Nam culpæ meæ super- For my iniquities reach
gréssæ sunt caput me- above my head; like a
um, * sicut onus grave heavy load they weigh me
gravant me nimis.— down.

David's bodily and mental sufferings:

- 6 Fœtent, tabescunt livó- My wounds have a foul
res mei * propter insipi- odor, and are decaying be-
éntiam meam. cause of my folly.

- 7 Inclínátus, incurvátus I am bent, and greatly
sum valde, * toto die bowed down, all day long I
mæstus incédo. go about sorrowful.

- 90 Nam lumbi mei pleni My loins are full of in-
sunt inflammatióne, * flammation, nor is there

nec quicquam est sani
in carne mea.

anything healthy in my *Psalms*
flesh.

37

Elángui, contrítus sum
valde, * rúgio propter
frémítum cordis meí.

I am feeble, I am griev-
ously bruised, I groan be-
cause of the murmuring of
my heart.

Dómine, coram te est
omne desidérium meum,
* et gémitus meus te non
latet.

All my desire is known to
thee, O Lord, and my
groaning is not hidden
from thee.

Cor meum pálpitat, de-
reliquit me robur meum,
* et ipsa lux oculórum
meórum déficit me.

My heart throbs, my
strength abandons me, and
even the light of my eyes
fails me.

Amíci mei et sodáles
mei prócul a plaga mea
subsístunt, * et propín-
qui mei stant e longín-
quo.

My friends and my com-
panions stay far from my
sore, and my kinsmen
stand afar off.

Et láqueos tendunt qui
insidiántur vitæ meæ, et
qui quærunt mihi ma-
lum, perniciem minán-
tur * et fraudes omni
tépore moliúntur.

And they that plot against
my life lay snares, and they
that seek evil to me threat-
en ruin, and form treacher-
ous designs all the time.

Confidence in God:

Ego autem, tamquam
surdus, non áudio, * et
sum velut mutus non
apériens os suum.

But I, like a deaf man,
hear not; and I am like a
dumb man, not opening his
mouth.

Et factus sum sicut ho-
mo qui non audit, * et
qui non habet respón-
sum in ore suo.

And I am become like a
man that hears not, and
that has no answer in his
mouth.

In te enim, Dómine,
confído: * tu exáudies,
Dómine, Deus meus.

For in thee, O Lord, I
trust: thou, O Lord, my
God, wilt hear.

Etenim dico: "Ne læ-

For I say: "Let them not

Psalm 37 *téntur de me; * dum rejoice over me; when my lábitur pes meus, ne su- foot slips, let them not pèrbiant contra me.”— gloat over me.”*

A prayer for deliverance:

- 15 Ego enim lápsui próxi- For I am ready to fall, and
mus sum, * et dolor me- my sorrow is always before
us coram me est semper. me.
- 19 Etenim culpam meam For I confess my wicked
confíteor, * et ob peccá- ness; and I am troubled be
tum meum sum ánxius. cause of my sin.
- 20 Sed qui sine causa ad- But they that withstand
versántur mihi, poténtes me without reason are pow-
sunt, * et multi, qui odé- erful, and many are they
runt me injúste; that hate me unjustly;
- 21 Et qui retriíbunt mal- And they that render evil
lum pro bono, * infé- for good attack me because
stant me, quia bonum I follow the good.
sector.
- 22 Noli me derelínquere, Forsake me not. O Lord
Dómine, * Deus meus, my God, be not far from
noli procul distáre a me! me.
- 23 Festína in auxílium Make haste to help me. O
meum, * Dómine, salus Lord, my salvation!
mea!

Commentary

David (so the title) asks the Lord to mitigate the extreme suffering his hand has imposed as a punishment for his sin. He cries out in physical pain and heartfelt sorrow. His dear ones do not console him and his enemies are seeking his life; yet he suffers it humbly.

18-23: For he has put his hope in the Lord only. He confesses the threatening ruin (verse 18 in Hebrew: "I am ready to fall") to be the result of his guilt, though he has not given his enemies such cause for hatred. He begs the Lord not to forsake him, but to bring speedy salvation.

Reflection

92 **C**hrist, who endured manifold sufferings in his own sacred Body, should be our Model in all our infirmities.

PSALM 38

Submission

Psalm
38

To Avoid Complaining When Sick

Peace and patience in suffering. In his distress David makes no complaint against God's Providence, but accepting his lot he prays for relief.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori, Idithun. For the choir-master, Idithun.
Psalmus. Davidis. A psalm of David.

A resolution of silence in temptation:

<p>Dixi: custódiam vias meas, * ut non pec- cem lingua mea; Frenum appónam ori meo, * dum impius est coram me. Obmütui silens, bono carens, * sed dolor meus recrúduit. Incáluit cor meum in- tra me; cum considerávi, exársit ignis: * locútus sum lingua mea.—</p>	<p>I</p>	<p>said: I will guard my ways, lest I sin with my tongue; I will put a bridle on my mouth, while the wicked man is before me. I kept silent, even from good, but my sorrow broke out afresh. My heart grew hot within me; when I reflected, a fire flamed out; I spoke with my tongue.</p>
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Silence kindles a fire within the psalmist, and so he gives vent to his emotions:

<p>Notum fac mihi, Dómi- ne, términum meum, et quæ mensúra sit diérum meórum, * ut sciam, quam cadúcus sim ego. Ecce paucórum palmó- rum fecisti dies meos, et vita mea quasi nihil est coram te: * ut hálitus lantum stat omnis ho- mo.</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>ake known to me, what is my end, O Lord, and what is the length of my days; that I may know how frail I am. Lo, thou hast made my days but a span, and my life is as nothing before thee: every man is but a breath.</p>
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<p>Ut umbra tantum per- tránsit homo, inániter lantum tumultuátur; *</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>an passes away like a mere shadow, his worrying is all in vain, he gathers up</p>
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Psalm 38 coacervat nec scit quis and knows not who shall percipiat ea.— reap.

38

Trustful resignation in God, his only hope;

- 8 Et nunc quid exspecto, And now what do I wait
Dómine? * fidúcia mea for, O Lord? my trust is in
est in te. thee.
- 9 Ab ómnibus iniquitáti- Deliver me from all my
bus meis libera me, * iniquities, make me not the
oppróbio stulti ne tra- scorn of the foolish.
dideris me.—
- 10 Obmútui, non apério I was struck dumb, I am
os meum: * tu enim fe- silent: For thou hast done
cisti. it.
- 11 Rémove a me plagam Remove thy scourge from
tuam: * ímpetu manus me: I am consumed by the
tuæ ego consúmor. blow of thy hand.
- 12 Correptióne culpæ ca- Thou by rebuke dost
stígas virum; dissólvis, chasten man for wicked
ut tinea, pretiósa ejus: * ness; thou destroyest, like
hálitus tantum est om- the moth, what is precious
nis homo. to him: every man is but a
breath.
- 13 Audi oratiónem meam, Hear my prayer. O Lord
Dómine, et clamórem and hearken to my cry, be
meum auscúltá, * ad lá- not heedless of my tears
crimas meas ne fúeris
surdus.
- Hospes enim sum apud For I am a stranger to
te, * peregrínus, sicut thee a sojourner, like ad
omnes patres mei. my fathers.
- 14 Avérte óculos a me, ut Turn thine eyes from
respírem, * priúsquam me that I may recover
vadám et non sim. strength, before I go hence
and be no more!

Commentary

David (so the title) here, as in psalm 36, is troubled on be-
holding how the good suffer and the evil prosper. He be-
gins by saying that he had resolved not to murmur at or dis-
cuss in any way (so verse 3: "I was silent even about good
things" or "I kept silent even though I lacked anything good")

ach a state of things. But he was depressed and sorrowful, *Psalm*
and even burning with anger.

5-7: Finally he spoke asking the Lord to give him humility, **39**
y showing him the brevity of human life and the transient
ature of worldly prosperity.

8-14: There is only one sure hope for the psalmist: the
ord. He acknowledges that his own sufferings are in punish-
ent of his sins and asks the Lord to have pity on him and
are him.

Reflection

God has given man an inexhaustible fountain of
divine clemency in the sacrament of Penance,
where we may open our souls to the priest and
all all our troubles.

PSALM 39

Christ's Mission

For Resignation in Adversity

Obedience and gratitude are better than legal sacrifices. God would have David make a complete sacrifice of his whole being to the eternal will. Faith assures him of divine assistance.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Davidis. For the choir-master. A psalm
almus. of David.

Thanksgiving for God's mercies:

perávi, sperávi in Dó- **I** hoped, I hoped in the
mino, et inclinávit se **L**ord, and he bent down
d me, * et exaudivit to me and heard my cry.
amórem meum.

Et extráxit me de fossa And he drew me out of the
sterilus, de luto cæni, pit of destruction, out of
státuit super petram the filthy mire; and he
edes meos, * firmávit planted my feet upon a
ressus meos. rock, he made firm my
steps.

Et pósuit in ore meo And he put in my mouth a
anticum novum, * car- new canticle, a song to our
en Deo nostro. God.

Vidébunt multi, et ve- Many shall see, and shall
búntur, * et sperábunt fear, and they shall hope in
i Dómino.— the Lord.

Psalm

How great are God's benefits:

39

Beátus vir, qui p̄suiť in Dómino spem suam, * nec sectátur idolórum cultóres et declinántes ad falsa. Blessed the man who has put his hope in the Lord and who follows not the worshipers of idols and them that turn aside to false things.

6 Multa fecísti tu, Dómine, Deus meus, mirabilia tua, * et consiliis erga nos nemo est símilis tibi. Thou hast multiplied thy wonderful works. O Lord my God, and there is no one like unto thee in thy plan for us.

Si ea volúerim narráre et éloqui, * plura sunt, quam quæ numerári possint.— Should I wish to declare and speak them, they are more than can be numbered.

Obedience is better than sacrifice:

7 Sacrificium et oblatiōnem noluísti, * sed aures aperuísti mihi. Sacrifice and oblation thou didst not desire, but thou hast opened my ears.

Holocáustum et victimam pro peccáto non postulásti: * tunc dixi: "Ecce venio; in volúmine libri scriptum est de me: Burnt-offering and sin offering thou didst not require. Then I said: "Behold I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me:

9 Fácere voluntátem tuam, Deus meus, me delectat, * et lex tua est in præcórdiis meis." I delight to do thy will, O my God, and thy law is in the depths of my heart.

10 Annuntiávi justítiam in cœtu magno; * ecce lábia mea non cohíbui; Dómine, tu nosti. I have proclaimed thy justice in the great assembly; lo, I did not restrain my lips; Lord, thou knowest

11 Justítiam tuam non abscondi in corde meo; * fidelitátem tuam et auxílium tuum narrávi. I have not hidden thy justice within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy help.

96

Non occultávi grátiam I have not concealed th

tuam * et fidelitatem grace and thy faithfulness *Psalm*
tuam cœtui magno.— from the great assembly.

39

Humble supplication for help in time of danger:

Tu, Dómine, ne prohi- Withhold not thy mercies
bueris miseratiões tuas from me, O Lord; may thy
a me; * grátia tua et grace and thy faithfulness
fidélitas tua semper me guard me always.
conservent.

Nam circumdederunt For evils beyond number
me mala, quorum non have surrounded me, my
est númerus, * compre sins have overtaken me, so
henderunt me culpæ me- that I can not see.
æ, ut non possim vidére.

Plures sunt quam ca- They are more than the
pilli cápitis mei, * et áni hairs of my head, and my
mus meus me defécit. courage has failed me.

Pláceat tibi, Dómine, Be pleased, O Lord, to
ut erípias me; * Dómi- rescue me; O Lord, make
ne, ad adjuvándum me haste to help me.
festina.

Confundántur et eru- Let all be confounded and
bescant omnes, * qui put to shame, that seek my
quærunť vitam meam, life to destroy it.
ut auferant eam.

Cedant retrórsum et Let them fall back and be
pudóre afficiántur, * qui covered with confusion,
delectántur malis meis. who take pleasure in my
distresses.

Obstupéscant confusi- Let them be stupified and
one operti, * qui dicunt covered with shamethat say
mihi: Euge, euge! to me: 'Tis well, 'tis well!

Exsúltent et læténtur Let all that seek thee re-
in te omnes, qui quæ- joice and be glad in thee!
runt te, * et dicant sem- and let them that desire
per: "Magnificétur Dó- thy help say always: "The
minus," qui desiderant Lord be praised,"
auxílium tuum.

Ego autem miser sum As for me, I am afflicted 97

Psalm et pauper; * sed Dómi- and poor; but the Lord is
 nus sollicitus est mei. solicitous for me.
 40 Adjutor meus et liberá- Thou art my helper and
 tor meus es tu; * Deus my redeemer: Tarry not, O
 meus, ne tardáveris. my God.

Commentary

This psalm of David which tradition accepts as referring to Christ—St. Paul (Hebrews 10, 5 ff.) applies verses 7-9 to Christ—begins with a joyful thanksgiving that the Lord has rescued the psalmist from difficulty. He points out how such care of the Lord teaches others to trust in the Lord. As for the psalmist, the wondrous graces that the Lord has given him are too numerous to tell.

7-11: In return for his goodness the Lord desires not so much sacrifice as complete and ready obedience, which the psalmist will give. (This is the sense of verses 7 and 8, whether we follow the Greek version, as St. Paul does in Hebrews: "A body thou hast fashioned for me," and "In the head of the book it is written of me, that I should do thy will . . ."; or whether we follow the Hebrew which has: "Ears thou hast opened for me," and "In the head of the book . . ."). The psalmist carries out the divine will by making the Lord's justice and fidelity known to all the people.

12-18: Then the psalmist returns to pleading that he may be spared from the present evils and dangers, so that the good men and not the evil may rejoice.

Verses 14-18 of this psalm are identical with psalm 69.

Reflection

In obedience we must follow the example of Christ, who "became obedient to death, even to death on a cross" (Phil 2, 8).

PSALM 40

A Beatitude

For the Sick in Need of Comfort

Prayer of a sick man against enemies. Knowing that God is merciful to such as show mercy to their fellow-men, the psalmist confides in God and is not discouraged by the taunts of his enemies.

The title of the psalm:

- ¹ Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of Davidis.

Blessings in store for the compassionate man:

98 **B**eátus qui cógitat de **B**lessed is he that takes
 egéno et páupere: * **B**thought for the needy

die malo salvábit eum Dominus. and poor; the Lord will deliver him in the evil day. *Psalm*

40

Dóminus custódi-teum, et vivum servábit eum, et beátum fáci-et eum in terra, * nec tradet eum voluntáti inimicórum ejus. The Lord will guard him and give him life, and make him happy in the land: and will not deliver him up to the will of his enemies.

Dóminus opem feret illi in lecto dolóris: * totam infirmitátem ejus auferet in morbo ejus.— The Lord will help him on his bed of sorrow; and will take away all his enfeeblement during his sickness.

Persecutions of the psalmist:

Ego dico: Dómine, miserere mei; * sana me, quia peccávi tibi. I say: O Lord, be thou merciful to me! Heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee!

Inimíci mei malum de me dicunt: * “quando moriétur et peribit nomen ejus?” My foes speak evil about me: “When will he die and his name perish?”

Et qui venit, ut invísat, lóquitur inánia; * cor ejus iníqua cólligit sibi, foras egréssus elóquitur. And when one who comes to visit me, speaks vain things; his heart is gathering wicked things for himself, he goes out and talks.

Simul contra me susúrant omnes qui me odérunt; * cógitant contra me quæ sunt mihi mala: All that hate me whisper together against me; they have thoughts against me which are harmful to me:

“Pestis málgna immíssa est ei,” * et “qui decúbit, non ámplius resúrget.” “A grievous sickness,” say they, “has fallen upon him,” and “he that lies there, will not rise again.”

Etiam amícus meus, cui físus sum, * qui panem meum comédit, contra me calcáneum movit.— Even my friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, lifted his heel against me.

Psalm

A prayer for mercy:

- 41 Tu autem, Dómine, mi- But thou, O Lord have
serére mei, et érige me, mercy on me and raise me
* ut retribuam eis. up again, that I may pay
them back.
- 12 Inde cognóscam te fa- By that I shall know thou
vére mihi, * quod non dost favor me, because my
exsultábit de me inimí- enemy shall not gloat over
cus meus. me.
- 13 Me autem incólumem But thou wilt keep me
sustentábis, * et pones safe, and set me in thy
me in conspéctu tuo in sight forever.
ætérnum.—

A doxology:

- 14 Benedíctus Dóminus, Blessed be the Lord, the
Deus Israë!, * a sáeculo God of Israel, forever and
in sáeculum. Fiat, fiat. forever. Amen! Amen!

Commentary

The psalmist, David (according to the title), here recalls that the Lord is merciful to those who show mercy to the poor.

5-10: So he now calls upon the Lord mercifully to heal his sin and so save him from his present sad state, which causes his enemies and even former truest friends to talk hopefully of his dying. (Hebrew of verse 9 may mean: "An evil malady is poured out upon him—he will not rise again.")

11-13: He asks the Lord mercifully to restore him so that he may punish the traitor and know that he enjoys the divine favor.

14: "Blessed be the Lord, etc." is a doxology closing the first book or collection of psalms.

Reflection

Let us resign ourselves to God's will, if we find ourselves suffering from the disloyalty of friends
Judas betrayed our Lord, but Jesus triumphed
over the disloyalty of his false apostle.

PSALM 41

Ardent Desire

For Those Spiritually Depressed

tion of happier days, he bids his soul to hope for a share in the worship of the Sanctuary.

Psalm

41

The title of the psalm:

agistro chori. Filiorum For the choir-master. A maskil
re. of the sons of Core.

Taunted by his enemies the psalmist yearns for God and his sanctuary:

Uuemádmodum desí- **A**s the hind pants for the
derat cerva rivos water brooks, so my
uárum, * ita desíde- soul pants after thee, O
t ánima mea te, Deus. God.

itit ánima mea Deum, My soul thirsts for God,
um vivum: * quando for the living God: when
nam et vidébo faciém shall I come and see the
1? face of God?

actæ sunt mihi lácri- My tears have become my
æ meæ panis die ac bread day and night, whilst
cte, * dum dicunt mi- they say to me daily:
quotídie: "Ubi est Where is thy God?
us tuus?"

lud recórdor et effún- That I remember and I
ánimum meum intra pour out my soul within
*: quómodo incésserim me: how I walked in the
turba, * præcésserim throng and went before
ad domum Dei, them to the house of God,

ter voces exsultatió- Mid the sounds of joy and
is et laudis, * in cœtu praise in a festive gather-
tivo. ing.

uare deprímeris, áni- Why art thou cast down,
t mea, * et tumultus O my soul, and disquieted
s in me? within me?

pera in Deum: quia Hope in God, for I will
sus celebrábo eum, * again praise him, the sal-
utem vultus mei et vation of my countenance
um meum. and my God!

Hope in God:

me ipso ánima mea My soul is cast down with-
primitur: * ideo re- in me: therefore I remem-
dor tui ex terra Jor- ber thee, from the land of

Psalm 41 dānis et Hermon, ex Jordan and Hermon, from the mount of Misar.

41

Gurges gúrgitem vocat Deep calls unto deep with the thunder of thy cataractum tuarum: * omnes racts: all thy billows and fluctus et undæ tuæ super thy waves have passed over me.

9 Per diem largiátur Dóminus grátiam suam, * Lord bestow his grace; and et nocte canam ei, lau in the night I will sing to dábo Deum vitæ meæ. him, I will praise the God of my life.

10 Dico Deo: Petra mea, I say to God: my Rock, cur obliviscéris mei? * Why dost thou forget me? quare tristis incédo, ab Why go I sorrowful, afflictio inimíco opprèssus? by the enemy?

11 Ossa mea frangúntur, My bones are being dum insúltant mihi ad broken while my foes revérsarii mei, * dum di vilify me; while they say videntur mihi quotidie: "Ubi me daily: "Where is thy est Deus tuus?" God?"

12 Quare deprímeris, áni- Why art thou cast down ma mea, * et tumultuáris in me? O my soul, and troubled within me?

Spera in Deum: quia Hope in God, for I will rursus celebrábo eum, * praise him again, the salutem vultus mei et vation of my countenance Deum meum. and my God.

Commentary

This psalm, attributed to the sons of Core, describes the longing of one in exile for the sanctuary of God. As a thirsty deer pants after water, so is his soul athirst for God. Constantly he weeps under the taunt "Where is thy God?" when he recalls how, with joy and music, he formerly journeyed to the house of God. But he encourages his soul to trust in God.

7-12: He will ever remember God, even in his exile, when troubles flood over him. God will show favor, for he will pray to him, even while cruel enemies oppress and torment him. He is sure that one day he will be thanking the Lord for his deliverance. So again he encourages his soul to trust in God.

Reflection

Psalm

ur happiness will never be perfect until we possess fully in heaven the divine Being for whom we were made. 42

PSALM 42

Holy Aspiration

At the Beginning of Mass

Longing for the Sanctuary. Though troubled greatly by heathen strangers, who surround him and mock him, the psalmist is confident that he will once again appear before his God in Jerusalem.

Confidence of the psalmist that he will reappear before God:

us redde mihi, Deus, Give judgment for me, O
et age causam meam God, and plead my
lversus gentem non cause against a godless
nctam; * ab hómine nation; deliver me from the
lóso et iníquo libera unjust and deceitful man.
e,

quia tu es, Deus, forti- For thou, O God, art my
do mea: * quare me strength: why hast thou
ppulisti? quare tristis cast me off? Why go I sor-
cédo, ab inimíco op- rowful, afflicted by the
éssus? enemy?

mitte lucem tuam et Send forth thy light and
lelitétem tuam: ipsæ thy faithfulness; let them
e ducant, * addúcant lead me, let them bring me
e in montem sanctum to thy holy hill and to thy
um et in tabernácula tabernacles!

a.

It introibo ad altáre And I will go in to the
ei, * ad Deum lætítiæ altar of God, to the God of
exultationis meæ, my joy and gladness,

It laudábo te cum cí- And to thee, O God, my
ara, * Deus, Deus God, I will give praise upon
eus! the harp,

quare deprímeris, áni- Why art thou cast down,
a mea, * et tumultuá- O my soul, and troubled
in me? within me?

pera in Deum: quia Hope in God, for I will 103

Psalm rursus celebrábo eum, * praise him again, the sal
43 salútem vultus mei et vation of my countenance
 Deum meum. and my God!

Commentary

This is really a part of the preceding psalm, though it is ascribed to David in the Greek and Vulgate. The psalm continues to pray for deliverance from impious oppressors. It asks the Lord to send freedom that will allow him to go on more to his sanctuary, making music joyfully as in his youth. And again he encourages his soul to trust in God.

Reflection

Love means to become one with the one loved, to be eternally united with the one loved. Let our love of God be ever of such a nature!

PSALM 43

Israel's Affliction

For Those Who Doubt God's Love

A fervent appeal in national disaster. In their prayer the people are inspired with renewed confidence by the remembrance of God's past favors and their present fidelity to his covenant.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Filiorum Core. For the choir-master. A part of the sons of Core.

A recalling of God's mighty deeds for Israel:

- 2 **D**eus, áuribus nostris **W**e have heard, O God
 audívimus, * patres with our ears, our
 nostri narravérunt nobis fathers have told us.
 Opus quod operátus es The work thou didst do
 diébus eórum, * diébus their time, in the days
 antíquis. old.
 3 Tu, manu tua, génti- Thou, with thy hand, hav-
 bus expulsis, plantásti ing driven out heathen
 eos; * attrítis natióibus, didst establish them; hav-
 dilatásti eos. ing destroyed nations, thou
 didst scatter them.
 4 Neque enim gládio suo For they took possessio-
 occupavérunt terram, * of the land not by their own
 nec bráccium eórum sword, nor did their own
 salvávit eos, arm save them,

Sed dextera tua et brachium tuum * et serenitas vultus tui, quoniam dilexisti eos.—

Tu es rex meus, Deus meus, * qui tribuisti victorias Jacob.

Per te adversarios nostros reppulimus, * et in nomine tuo calcavimus insurgentes in nos.

Neque enim in arcu meo confisus sum, * nec gladius meus salvavit me.

Sed tu salvasti nos ab adversariis nostris, * et eos, qui oderunt nos, confudisti.

In Deo gloriabamur omni tempore, * et nomen tuum perpetuo celebrabamus.

But thy right hand and thy arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou didst love them.

Thou art my king, my God, who gave victories to Jacob.

By thee we have thrust down our enemies, and in thy name we have trampled upon them that rose against us.

For I have not trusted in my bow, nor has my sword saved me.

But thou hast saved us from our foes, and thou hast confounded them that hate us.

In God shall we glory at all times, and thy name we shall praise forever.

Israel now is in bondage to the heathens:

Nunc vero reppulisti et confudisti nos, * et non egraderis, Deus, cum exercitibus nostris.

Cedere nos fecisti adversariis nostris, * et qui oderunt nos, praedati sunt sibi.

Tradidisti nos velut oves mactandas, * et inter gentes dispersisti nos.

But now thou hast repulsed and confounded us, and thou dost not go forth, O God, with our armies.

Thou hast made us yield to our enemies, and they that hate us plunder us at will.

Thou hast handed us over like sheep that are to be slaughtered, and hast scattered us among the heathens.

Psalm

43

Vendidisti pópulum tu-
um pretío nullo, * nec
multum lucrátus es vén-
ditis illis.

Thou hast sold thy people
for a mere trifle, and thou
hast not made great gain
by their sale.

14 Fecísti nos oppróbri-
um vicínis nostris, * ir-
risiónem et ludíbrium
his, qui nos circúmdant.

Thou hast made us a re-
proach to our neighbors, a
scoff and a derision to those
around us.

15 Fecísti nos fábulam in-
ter gentes, * pópuli ca-
put movent de nobis.

Thou hast made us a
laughing-stock among the
heathens, people wag their
heads about us.

16 Perpétuo coram me est
ignomínia mea * et con-
fúsio óperit fáciem me-
am,

My disgrace is always be-
fore me, and shame covers
my face,

17 Propter vocem expro-
brántis et conviciántis,
* propter inimícum et
hostem.

Because of the voice of
him who scoffs and revile
because of the enemy and
of the revenger.

18 Hæc ómnia venérunt
super nos, etsi tui non
sumus oblíti, * nec vio-
lávimus fœdus tuum,

All these things have come
upon us although we have
not forgotten thee, nor
broken thy covenant.

19 Nec retro cessit cor no-
strum * nec gressus no-
ster defléxit a sémita tua,

Nor has our heart turned
back, nor our step strayed
from thy path.

20 Quando contrivísti nos
in loco afflictiónis, * et
caligine nos operuísti.

When thou hast humbled
us in the place of affliction,
and hast covered us with
darkness.

21 Si oblíti essémus no-
men Dei nostri, * et ex-
pandissémus manus no-
stras ad deum aliénum:

If we had forgotten the
name of our God, and
spread forth our hands to
a strange god,

22 Nonne Deus exploráta
habéret ista? * ipse enim
novit abscóndita cordis.

Would not God have
searched out those things?
for he knows the secrets of
the heart.

Sed propter te trucidá- But for thy sake we are *Psalm*
 nur omni témpore, * butchered at all times, we
 estimámur velut oves are counted as sheep **43**
 nactándæ.— marked for slaughter.

An urgent appeal for help:

Expergíscere: quare Awake: Why sleepest
 formis, Dómine? * eví- thou, Lord? Rouse up!
 gila! noli repéllere in Reject us not forever!
 perpétuum!

Quare faciém tuam abs- Why dost thou hide thy
 vóndis? * oblivísceris face? Why dost thou for-
 nisériæ nostræ et op- get our trouble and our
 pressiónis nostræ? burden?

Nam prostráta est in For our soul is cast down
 úlverem ánima nostra, to the dust, our belly is flat
 in terra jacet venter on the earth!
 ioster.

Exsúrge in auxílium Arise to help us, and res-
 nobis, * et libera nos cue us for thy mercy's sake.
 propter misericórdiam
 tuam.

Commentary

The psalm of the sons of Core, recalls the great deeds of God in the past when he helped Israel fight its way into Canaan. So will God, their King, ever give victory to Israel and scatter her foes, for she does not trust in her military strength but in the Lord. In him she boasts; him she praises.

10-17. But now all this seems to be contradicted—for God seems not to be with Israel's army. They are beaten and scattered like sheep among people who scorn and jeer at them. They are never allowed to forget their disgrace.

18-23: All this has befallen the people although they were faithful to their God; for his sake they are persecuted.

24-26: The psalmist therefore calls upon the Lord to arise, to cease to seem indifferent to his people—to arise and help them.

Reflection

God will never forsake his people. Achior acknowledged divine providence when he told Holofernes: "Wheresoever they (the Israelites) went in without bow and arrow, and without shield and sword, their God fought for them and overcame" (Judith 5, 16).

Psalm
44

PSALM 44

The Marriage Song

In Desire for Union with God

A nuptial song composed to celebrate a royal wedding. The bridegroom is the Messiah, while the bride is the Church of the Old Testament, perfected by Christ's union with it in the New Testament.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro, chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the
"Lilia . . ." Filiorum Core. melody of "The Lilies." A mask,
Canticum amoris. of the sons of Core. A love-song

Dedication:

- 2 **E**ffúndit cor meum **M**y heart pours forth a
verbum bonum: dico good theme: I recite
ego carmen meum Regi; my poem for the king: my
* lingua mea stilus est tongue is the pen of a ready
scribæ velócis.— scribe.

The beauty, glory and justice of the bridegroom:

- 3 Specíósus es forma præ Thou art beautiful above
filiis hóminum, diffúsa the sons of men, grace is
est grátia super lábia poured out on thy lips:
tua: * proptérea bene- therefore has God blessed
dixit tibi Deus in ætér- thee forever.
num.
- 4 Cinge gládium tuum Gird thy sword on thy
super femur, potentis- thigh, thou most mighty
sime, * decórem tuum et one, thy splendor and thy
ornátum tuum! glory!
- 5 Felíciter évéhere pro Go forth victoriously for
fide et pro justitia, * et faith and for justice, and
præclára gesta dóceat te may thy right hand teach
dextera tua. thee wondrous deeds.
- 6 Sagittæ tuæ acútæ, pó- Thy arrows are sharp
puli tibi subdúntur, * peoples are brought under
deficiunt corde inimíci thee, the foes of the king,
Regis. lose heart.
- 7 Thronus tuus, Deus, in Thy throne, O God, is for
sæculum sæculi; * scep- ever and ever; the scepter
trum æquitátis sceptrum of right is the scepter of
regni tui. thy kingdom.

Diligis justitiam et odisti iniquitatem: prop- Thou lovest justice and hatest iniquity: therefore *Psalm*
 érea unxit te Deus, God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of glad- 44
 ðeus tuus, * óleo lætifi- ness above thy fellows.

Myrrha et álœ et cássia Thy robes are fragrant
 ragrant vestiménta tua; with myrrh, aloes, and cas-
 ex ádibus ebúrneis fí- sia: out of ivory palaces the
 ium sonus lætíficat te. sound of the strings de-
 lights thee.

Fíliæ regum óbviám vé- The daughters of kings
 iunt tibi, * regina ad- come to meet thee, the
 tat ad dexteram tuam queen stands at thy right
 rnata auro ex Ophir.— hand, adorned in gold of
 Ophir.

A description of the bride:

Audi, filia, et vide, et Hearken, O daughter, and
 inclína aurem tuam, * see, and incline thy ear,
 tobliviscere pópulum tu- and forget thy people and
 m et domum patris tui. thy father's house.

Et concupiscet Rex pul- And the king shall greatly
 hritúdinem tuam: * ip- desire thy beauty; he is thy
 e est dóninus tuus; lord; pay homage to him.
 bséquere ei.

Et pópulus Tyri cum And the people of Tyre
 unéribus venit; * favó- come with gifts, and the
 em tuum captant pró- richest of the people strive
 eres plebis. for thy favor.

Tota decóra ingréditur All glorious, the king's
 ília Regis; * textúræ daughter goes in; her robes
 ureæ sunt amíctus ejus. are of cloth of gold.

Amíctu variegáto indú- Clad in a robe of many
 a addúctur ad Regem; colors she is led to the king;
 vírgines post eam, só- after her, the young maid-
 iæ ejus, adducúntur ens, her companions, are
 d te. brought to thee.

Afferúntur cum lætítia They are led in with re-
 t exsultatíone, * ingre- joicing and gladness, they 109

Psalm diúntur in palátium Re- go into the palace of the
gis.— king.

45

Good wishes to the king:

- 17 Loco patrum tuórum Sons will be given to thee
erunt filii tui; * consti- in place of thy fathers
tues eos príncipes super thou shalt make them
totam terram. princes all over the earth.
- 18 Memorábo nomen tu- I will remember thy name
um in omnem genera- for all generations; there
tiónem et generatióem; fore the peoples shall praise
* proptérea pópuli cele- thee forever.
brábunt te in sæculum
sæculi.

Commentary

In this psalm, attributed to the sons of Core, we have a royal marriage song. Since St. Paul quotes verse 7 (Hebrews 1, 8) of Christ, it is accepted in Christian tradition as messianic.

2-10: After an introductory verse dedicating the song to the King, the psalmist proceeds to praise his beauty and graciousness and splendor which augur a reign of truth, meekness, justice and victory, with the special help of God. Then the psalmist vividly describes the splendor of the bridal procession.

11-16: Next the psalmist addresses the bride who is advised to forget her father's house in exchange for the love of the King and the glory of his court. The bride is then described (verse 14 in the Hebrew: "All glorious is the King's daughter within" is obscure. Some complete the sense by adding: "her palace." Another suggested reading: "All glorious is the King's daughter in pearls," which fits better with the following verse) as she passes with her train to the royal palace.

17-18: He predicts perpetual glory and fame for the offspring of this union.

Reflection

Our souls were made by God, and they are like unto him. As human spouses are united for their entire earthly life, the soul is made to live forever with God.

PSALM 45

Our Stronghold

To Remain Faithful in Temptation

Lord is inviolable in his Sanctuary. A recent illustration of this truth.

Psalm
45

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Filiorum For the choir-master. Of the
fore. Secundum "Virgines...". sons of Core. According to "The
'anticum." virgins." A song.

God is the refuge and strength of his people:

Deus est nobis refúgi- **G**od is a refuge and a
um et robur; * adju- strength unto us; he
órem in angústis pro- has greatly shown himself
ávavit se valde. a help in times of trouble.

Propterea non timé- Therefore we fear not,
nus, dum subvértitur while the earth is over-
erra, * et montes ca- thrown and the mountains
unt in médium mare. fall into the midst of the
sea.

Tumultuéntur, æstuent Let its waters rage and
quæ ejus, * concutián- foam, let the mountains be
ur montes ímpetu ejus: shaken by its might:

Dóminus exercítuum The Lord of hosts is with
obíscum; * præsídi- us; the God of Jacob is a
obis est Deus Jacob.— stronghold unto us.

God is the refuge of Sion:

Flúminis rívoli lætífi- The streams of the river
ant civitátem Dei, * make glad the city of God,
anctíssimum taberná- the holy tabernacle of the
ulum Altíssimi. Most High.

Deus est in médio ejus, God is in its midst: it shall
ion commovébitur; * not be moved; God will
uxiliábitur ei Deus pri- come to its help at the
mo diluculo. break of day.

Fremuérent gentes, Nations were in tumult,
omnóta sunt regna; * kingdoms tottered; he
ntónuit voce sua, diffú- made his voice heard, the
it terra: earth melted:

Dóminus exercítuum The Lord of hosts is with
obíscum; * præsídi- us; the God of Jacob is a
obis est Deus Jacob.— stronghold unto us.

Psalm An exhortation to reflect upon God's marvelous deliverance.

45 Veníte, vidéte ópera Dómini, * quæ egit stu- Come, behold ye the works of God, what wondrous things he has done on the earth.

10 Qui compéscit bella us- Who makes wars to cease
que ad finem terræ, * even unto the end of the
arcus cónterit et con- earth, he breaks the bow
fríngit hastas, et scuta and sunders the spear
combúrit igni. and the shields he burns
with fire.

11 Desístite, et agnóscite Be still, and acknowledge
me Deum, * excélsum me to be God, exalted
géntibus, excélsum in among the nations, exalted
terra. on earth.

12 Dóminus exercítuum The Lord of hosts is with
nobíscum; * præsídi- us; the God of Jacob is
nobis est Deus Jacob. stronghold unto us.

Commentary

In this psalm (of the sons of Core) Israel's trust in God is expressed. Though all nature be shaken Israel stands firm because the Lord of hosts is Israel's strength.

5-8: God blesses with a many-branched (so the Hebrew) beneficent stream the city of God's dwelling. Since God is in Sion she is unshaken by the tumult of nature. The Lord of hosts is Israel's strength.

9-12: The psalmist calls upon men to consider the marvelous way in which the Lord will spread this triumphant peace to the ends of the earth—this Lord of hosts who is Israel's strength.

Reflection

As the Jews had absolute confidence in God, even in the most serious dangers, so does the Church rely on him with an unwavering trust, for he has said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16, 18).

PSALM 46

Psalm

46

The Victorious King

For Devotion to Jesus Christ, King

Hymn to God as King of the world. The final victory of God and the institution of the messianic kingdom, which is to include all nations.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. **Filiorum** For the choir-master. A psalm of the sons of Core. **Core.** Psalmus.

A universal summons to praise the God of Israel:

Omnes pópuli, pláudite **C**lap your hands, all ye
mánibus, * exsultáte peoples, shout unto God
Deo voce lætítiæ, with the voice of joy.
Quóniam Dóminus ex- For the Lord most high is
celsus, terribilis, * Rex terrible, he is a great king
magnus super omnem over all the earth.
terram.

Súbjicit pópulos nobis, He sets the peoples under
* et nátiões pédibus us; and the nations under
nostris. our feet.

Eligit nobis hereditá- He chooses our inherit-
tem nostram, * glóriam ance for us, the glory of
Jacob, quem díligit.— Jacob, whom he loves.

The future conversion of the Gentiles:

Ascéndit Deus cum ex- God has gone up amid
sultatióne, * Dóminus shouts of joy, the Lord with
cum voce tubæ. the sound of the trumpet.

Psállite Deo, psállite; * Sing a song of praise to
psállite Regi nostro, God, sing a song of praise;
psállite.— sing a song of praise to our
king, sing a song of praise.

Quóniam Rex omnis For God is the king of all
terræ est Deus, * psál- the earth, sing a hymn.
lite hymnum.

Deus regnat super na- God reigns over the na-
tiões, * Deus sedet super tions, God sits on his holy
sólum sanctum suum. throne.

Príncipes populórum The princes of the peoples
congregáti sunt * cum have come together with

Psalm pópulo Dei Abraham. the people of the God of Abraham;

47 Nam Dei sunt próceres For the great ones of the terræ: * excélsus est earth belong to God: he is valde. greatly exalted.

Commentary

The psalmist (here of the sons of Core) calls upon the nations to join in the praise of the Lord, King of the world, for giving victory to Israel, his beloved people.

6-10: The Lord ascends (upon the Ark carried in procession up to the Temple) amidst the rejoicing of the people, and is proclaimed king over the nations now united with Israel (This latter section refers to the Lord's universal messianic rule; hence some Fathers apply the psalm to the Ascension of our Lord, and his enthronement in heaven.)

Reflection

In the prayers after Mass we should pay particular attention to the prayer poured forth "for the conversion of sinners, and for the freedom and exaltation of our Holy Mother, the Church."

PSALM 47

Divine Favors

The Beauties of God's Temple

God is to be praised for protecting Sion. The city of God is made impregnable. The psalm in its fullest sense applies to the Church of Christ.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Canticum. Psalmus. Filio- A song and psalm of the son:
rum Core. of Core.

The greatness of God and the glory of his city:

- 2 **M**agnus Dóminus et **G**reat is the Lord, and
laudábilis valde, * greatly to be praised, in
in civitáte Dei nostri. the city of our God.

Mons sanctus ejus, 3 col- His holy mountain a beau-
lis præclárus, * gáudium tiful hill, is the joy of the
est univérsæ terræ; whole earth;

Mons Sion, áquilo ex- Mount Sion, on the north-
trémus, * civitas est Re- ern slope, is the city of the
gis magni. great king.

114 Deus in árcibus ejus * God in her citadels showed

sese probávit munímen himself to be a safe ram- *Psalms*
tutum. — part.

47

A recent deliverance of Jerusalem:

Ecce enim reges con- For lo, the kings came to-
gregáti sunt, * irruérunt gether, together they ad-
simul. vanced.

Vixdum viderant, ob- They had barely seen,
stupuérunt, * conturbáti they were amazed; they
ti sunt, diffugérunt. were troubled, they scat-
tered in flight.

Tremor invásit eos ibí- A trembling assailed them
dem, * dolor velut par- there, anguish as of a
turiéntis, woman in labor,

Ut cum ventus Oriéntis As when the east wind
* confríngit naves Thar- breaks the ships of Tharsis.
sis. —

Thanksgiving to God for his intervention:

Sicut audívimus, sic ví- As we have heard, so have
dimus, * in civitaté Dó- we seen, in the city of the
mini exercítium, Lord of hosts,

In civitaté Dei nostri: In the city of our God:
* Deus confirmat eam God makes it firm forever.
in ætérnum.

Recólimus, Deus, mise- O God, we think over thy
ricórdiam tuam * intra mercy within thy temple.
templum tuum.

Sicut nomen tuum, De- As thy name, O God, so
us, sic et laus tua * also thy praise reaches to
pertíngit ad fines terræ. the ends of the earth.

Justítia plena est dex- Thy right hand is full of
tera tua: * 12 lætétur justice: let Mount Sion re-
mons Sion, joice,

Exsúltent civitatés Ju- The cities of Juda exult
da * propter júdicia because of thy judgments.
tua.—

Perlustráte Sion, et cir- Walk through Sion and go
cúite eam, * numeráte round about it, count its
turres ejus. towers,

Consideráte propugná- Scan its ramparts, look 115

Psalm cula ejus, * percúrrite over its strongholds,
 48 arces ejus,
 Ut enarrétis generatió- That you may tell the fu-
 ni futúræ: * 15 tantus ture generation: So great is
 est Deus, God,
 Deus noster in ætér- Our God forever and al-
 num et semper: * ipse ways: he will lead us.
 nos ducet.

Commentary

This, like the preceding psalm, is a hymn of triumph, ascribed to the sons of Core. Sion should praise the Lord—Sion firmly established because God reigns there. Kings of the earth have leagued against Sion but on beholding this city they were struck with fear, like a woman in labor or like strong ships in the face of shipwreck.

9-15: Such things have men seen in the city established by the Lord of hosts. So Israel, gathered in God's Temple ponders on his love. This God, whose fame is worldwide, is a cause of rejoicing to Sion. Looking upon the city and its strength they are ever to remember that God dwells here as eternal guardian.

Reflection

We should edify those not of our Faith by our practical Catholicity, so that by our good example they may be converted, and praise God even to the ends of the earth (v. 11).

PSALM 48

Emptiness of Riches

For Those Who Envy the Prosperity of the Wicked
Wealth is of no avail to the wicked. By it they cannot prolong their life, and when they die they must leave it behind for others to enjoy.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Filiorum For the choir-master. A psalm of the sons of Core. Psalmus.

An invitation to listen to the psalmist's solution:

- 2 **A**udíte hæc, omnes gentes; * áuribus percíp- **H**ear these things, all ye peoples; give ear, all ye
 pite omnes qui habitátis that dwell in the world.
 orbem,

116 Húmiles natu æque ac Lowly men as well as men

próceres, * pari modo of high degree, rich man *Psalm*
dives et pauper. and poor man alike.

Os meum loquétur sapiéntiam, * et meditatio My mouth shall speak **48**
cordis mei intelligéntiam. wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall reveal understanding.

Inclinábo in provérbi- I will incline my ear to a
um aurem meam, * pandam proverb, I will unfold my
ad sonum lyræ ænígma enigma to the sound of the
meum.— harp.

In spite of their wealth the wicked must die:

Quare tímeam diébus Why should I fear, in evil
malis, * cum nequítia days, when the malice of
insidiántium me circum my foes besets me,
cúmdat,

Qui confídunt ópibus Men who trust in their
suis, * et de multitúdine wealth, and boast of the
divitiárum suárum glo abundance of their riches?
riántur?

Neque enim quisquam For nobody shall set him-
liberábit seípsum, * non self free, nor pay to God the
dabit Deo prétium red- price of his redemption:
emptiónis suæ:

Nímio constat liberátio The ransom of his soul
ánimæ ejus neque un- costs too much, nor will it
quam suffíciet, * ₁₀ ut ever be enough, to enable
vivat ultra in ætérnum him to live forever and not
nec vídeat intéritum. see death.

Vidébit enim mori sa- For he shall see that wise
piéntes, páriter interiire men die, that the foolish
insipiéntem et stultum, man and the stupid man
* relínquere aliénis divi- likewise perish, and leave
tias suas. their wealth to others.

Sépúlcrá sunt domus Graves are their houses
córum in ætérnum, ha- forever, their dwelling-
bitácula córum in pro- places from generation
geniem et progénien, * unto generation, although
quantúmvis nominibus they called lands by their
suis appelláverint terras. names.

Psalm

48

Homo enim in opuléntia non permanébit: * not abide: he is like unto similis est pecúdis the beasts that perish. quæ péreunt.

The apparent success of the wicked contrasted with the permanent happiness of the just:

14 Hæc via eórum, qui This is the way of them stulte confidunt, * et hic that are foolishly confident, and this is the end of finis eórum, qui sorte them that are pleased with sua delectántur. their portion.

15 Sicut oves in inférno Like sheep they are put in ponúntur; * mors pascit Sheol; death is their shepherd, and the just rule over eos, et iusti dominántur them. in eos.

Cito figúra eórum absu- Quickly their shape will métur, * inférnus erit be consumed. Sheol shall domus eórum. be their dwelling-place.

16 Verúmtamen Deus li- But God will set free my berábit ab inferis áni- soul from the grave, for he mam meam, * eo quod will take me. me assúmet.

17 Ne timúeris, si quis fa- Fear not, if anyone be- ctus sit dives, * si cré- come rich, if the wealth of verint opes domus ejus: his house be increased:

18 Neque enim, cum mo- For when he dies, he shall riétur, quidquam tollet take nothing with him, and secum. * neque opes ejus his riches shall not go down cum eo descédent. with him.

19 Etsi in vita sua bene- Although in his lifetime díxit sibi: * "Prædicá- he congratulated himself: bunt te, quod bene fecí- "They shall praise thee be- sti tibi," cause thou didst well for thyself,"

20 Ibit ad cœtum patrum He will go to the company suórum, * qui in ætér- of his fathers, who shall not num non vidébunt lu- see light forever. men.

118 Homo in opuléntia vi- Man living in wealth and

vens neque considerans, not understanding, is like *Psalm*
 * similis est pecúdis unto the beasts that perish. 49
 quæ péreunt.

Commentary

In this psalm of the sons of Core the author begins by calling upon all to hear the deep teaching that he is about to announce.

6-13: He then forcefully develops the idea that there is no need for man to fear the wicked who are powerful and rich. They cannot bribe God to free them from death. They must die, like all men, leaving their boasted possessions behind them.

Their riches do not give them immortality, but they must perish like the beasts of the field.

14-21: He repeats that the destiny of those who confide in this world's goods is the grave. The just will be taken to God, while the prosperous, self-complacent evildoer will be stripped by death of his possessions, and will enter the eternal darkness of the grave. The man who in his prosperity does not remember this is like the beast of the field that must perish.

Reflection

When our eyes grow dim and our heart grows cold in death; when the fame, power and glory of this life fade out before our dark, chill, silent grave, may we hear the words spoken to the good thief: "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise."

PSALM 49

True Worship

For Sincerity in Prayer

A condemnation of false piety. External worship without the proper dispositions of the heart is of no value. True piety must be accompanied by the faithful observance of God's law.

God comes down from heaven to judge his people: .

Psalmus. Asaphi.

A psalm of Asaph.

Deus Dóminus locútus **T**he Lord God has spoken
 est et vocávit terram and has summoned the
 * a solis ortu usque ad earth from the rising of the
 occásum. sun to the going down
 thereof.

Ex Sion, plena decóre, Out of Sion, out of her ful- 119

Psalm

49

Deus affúlsit: * „ advénit
Deus noster nec silet. ness of beauty, God has
shone forth: Our God
comes and keeps not si-
lence.

Ignis consúmens præ- Before him goes a devour-
cédit eum, * et circa eum ing fire, and a tempest
tempéstat furit. rages around him.

4 Vocat cælos desúrsum He calls the heavens from
et terram, * judicatúrus above and the earth, he is
pópulum suum: about to judge his people.

5 “Congregáte mihi san- “Gather ye my godly ones:
ctos meos, * qui pepigé- unto me, who ratified my
runt fœdus meum cum covenant with sacrifice.”
sacrificio.”

6 Et cæli annúntiant ju- And the heavens declare
stítiam ejus, * quóniam his justice, for God himself
Deus ipse est iudex.— is judge.

*The trial begins: internal holiness must accompany
external worship:*

7 “Audi, pópule meus, et “Listen, my people, and I
loquar, Israël, et testá- will speak, Israel, and I will
bor contra te: * Deus, bear witness against thee
Deus tuus sum ego. I am God, thy God.

8 Non de sacrificiis tuis Not for thy sacrifices do I
te reprehéndo, * nam chide thee, for thy burnt
holocáusta tua coram offerings are always before
me sunt semper.

9 Non accípam de domo I will not take a bullock
tua vítulum, * neque de from thy house, nor he-
grégibus tuis hircos: goats from thy flocks:

10 Nam meæ sunt omnes For all the wild animals
feræ silvárum, * bestiá- of the forest are mine, the
rum mília in móntibus thousands of beasts on my
meis. mountains.

11 Novi ómnia volatília I know all the birds of the
cæli, * et quod in agro air, and what moves in the
movétur, notum est field is known to me.
mihi.

120 Si esuríero, non dicam If I were hungry, I would

tibi: * meus enim est orbis et quod eum replet. not tell you: for mine is the world and what fills it. *Psalm*

Num comedam carnes taurorum, * aut sanguinem hircorum bibam? Shall I eat the flesh of bulls? or drink the blood of he-goats? **49**

Immola Deo sacrificium laudis, * et redde Altissimo vota tua. Offer to God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows to the Most High.

Et invoca me die angustiae: * liberabo te, et honorabis me." And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

Hypocritical sinners are condemned:

Peccatori autem dicit Deus: "Quare tu enarras praecepta mea, * et habes in ore tuo foedus meum? But to the sinner God says: "Why dost thou declare my statutes and have my covenant in thy mouth?

Tu, qui odisti disciplinam * et projecisti verba mea post te? Thou that hatest discipline and hast cast my words behind thee?

Cum videbas furem, currebas cum eo, * et cum adulteris pars tua erat. When thou didst see a thief, thou didst run with him, and thou wast partaker with adulterers.

Os tuum laxabas ad malum, * et lingua tua concinnabat dolos. Thou didst open thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue wove deceits.

Sedens, adversus fratrem tuum loquebaris, * filium matris tuae afficiebas opprobrio. Sitting, thou didst speak against thy brother, thou didst impute disgrace to thy mother's son.

Haec fecisti, et ego tacebo? existimasti me esse similem tui? * arguam te, et pandam ea ante oculos tuos.— These things thou hast done, and shall I be silent? Didst thou deem me to be like thyself? I will reprove thee and lay these things before thine eyes.

Intelligite haec, immé- Understand these things, **121**

Psalm mores Dei, * ne rápiam ye unmindful of God, lest I
 50 nec sit qui salvos reddat. snatch away and there be
 none to save you.

23 Qui ímmolat sacrifici- He who offers the sacrifice
 um laudis, honórat me,* of praise glorifies me, and
 et qui ámbulat recte, illi to him who walks aright I
 osténdam salútem Dei.” will show the salvation of
 God.”

Commentary

In this psalm, which is attributed to Asaph, God is described as summoning all men to a judgment. Then amidst thunder and lightning he appears and judges Israel his people who have entered a solemn covenant with him.

7-15: He then proceeds to list his charges against Israel. They are diligent in offering sacrifices of animals. He does not need them; and they are his anyway. He is not a pagan god whose hunger must be appeased. The fulfillment of their covenant obligations to him is the honor he wishes.

16-21: But many put false trust even in the covenant. They profess loyalty to it, but indeed they violate its fundamental commandments. God is bound to punish this. Only those who fulfill his whole law will he spare.

22-23: Those who have forgotten God must heed this lesson or he will surely destroy them. Only the righteous will be saved.

Reflection

Remember that our Lord, who revealed himself as our most merciful Saviour, will one day sit on his judgment-seat, to search our hearts and see if we have been faithful to his commands.

PSALM 50

Sincere Contrition

To Obtain the Spirit of Contrition

David's prayer of repentance and petition. It is a model act of contrition, containing an humble acknowledgment of guilt, profound sorrow and a sincere desire for conversion.

The title of the psalm:

122 ¹ Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm
 Davidis, ² cum venit ad eum of David. When Nathan the
 Nathan propheta, postquam prophet came to him, after he
 cum Bethsabée peccavit. had sinned with Bethsabée.

A prayer for pardon:

Psalm
50

Miserere mei, Deus, secundum misericordiam tuam; * secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum dele iniquitatem meam.

Penitus lava me a culpa mea, * et a peccato meo munda me.—

Nam iniquitatem meam ego agnosco, * et peccatum meum coram me est semper.

Tibi soli peccavi * et, quod malum est coram te, feci,

Ut manifestéris justus in sententia tua, * rectus in iudicio tuo.

Ecce, in culpa natus sum, * et in peccato concepit me mater mea.

Ecce, sinceritate cordis delectaris, * et in precordiis sapientiam me doces.—

Asperge me hyssopo, et mundabor; * lava me, et super nivem dealbabor.

Fac me audire gaudium et lætítiam, * exultent ossa quæ contrivisti.

Avérte faciém tuam a peccatis meis, * et omnes culpas meas dele.—

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy mercy; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my iniquity.

Wash me thoroughly from my offense, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my iniquity, and my sin is always before me.

Against thee only have I sinned, and I have done that which is evil in thy sight,

That thou be found just in thy sentence, upright in thy judgment.

Behold, I was born in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Lo, thou dost delight in sincerity of heart, and thou teachest me wisdom in the depths of my heart.

Sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; wash me, and I shall become whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness, let the bones thou hast crushed rejoice.

Turn thy face away from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Psalm Cor mundum crea mihi, Deus, * et spiritum firmum renova in me. Create a pure heart for me, O God, and renew in me a steadfast spirit.

13 Ne projéceris me a fácie tua, * et spiritum sanctum tuum ne abstúleris a me. Cast me not away from thy face, and take not thy holy spirit from me.

14 Redde mihi lætítiam salútis tuæ, * et spiritu generóso confírma me.— Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and strengthen me with a noble spirit.

Resolutions of thanksgiving:

15 Docébo iníquos vias tuas, * et peccatóres ad te converténtur. I will teach the unjust thy ways, and sinners shall be converted to thee.

16 Libera me a pœna sanguinis, Deus, Deus salvátor meus: * exsúltet lingua mea de justítia tua. O God, thou God of my salvation, deliver me from the guilt of blood: let my tongue rejoice because of thy justice.

17 Dómine, lábia mea apéries, * et os meum annuntiábit laudem tuam. O Lord, thou wilt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare thy praise.

18 Neque enim sacrificio delectáris; * et holocáustum, si darem, non acceptáres. For thou hast no delight in sacrifice, and a burnt offering thou wouldst not accept if I gave it.

19 Sacrificium meum, Deus, spiritus contrítus, * cor contrítum et humiliátum, Deus, non despícies.— My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit; a contrite and humbled heart. O God, thou wilt not despise.

A prayer for the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple:

20 Benígne fac, Dómine, pro bonitáte tua, erga Sion, * ut reædífices muros Jerúsalem. In thy goodness, O Lord, deal kindly with Sion, that thou mayest rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

124 Tunc acceptábis sacrificia legítima, oblatió— Then thou wilt accept lawful sacrifices, oblations

nes et holocáusta,* tunc and burnt-offerings, then *Psalm*
 ófferent super altáre tu- shall they offer calves upon **51**
 um vítulos. thy altar.

Commentary

The psalmist (here, according to the title, David after his sin with Bethsabée—cf. 2 Kings 12) asks God mercifully to blot out his sin. He humbly confesses his offense against God, and the sinfulness inherent in his nature (the effect of original sin). He has learned that God desires faithful service.

9-14: So he asks to be cleansed from his sins, that he may serve God again with joy. He prays for a complete remission of his sins, a clean heart, "steadfast purpose" (so the Hebrew in verse 12), and through God's grace, a willing spirit.

15-19: If God does this, then he will teach other sinners to return to God, by praising him for saving him from his sins. He knows God's mercy is won not by animal sacrifices but by a sincerely contrite heart.

20-21: These verses are a later liturgical addition begging God to restore ruined Jerusalem that sacrificial worship may be renewed.

Reflection

After we have sinned, like David we must humbly confess our faults, and our repentance must be sincere.

PSALM 51

The Malice of Calumny

The Lot of Sinners

David condemns Doeg, and foretells his destruction. A picture of the dreadful punishment of sins of the tongue, the sight of which inspires fear in the heart of the just.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Davidis, For the choir-master. A maskil
 postquam Doëg Edomita ad of David. After Doeg the Edom-
 Saul venit eique narravit di- ite came to Saul and made this
 cens: David intravit in do- report to him: David has gone
 num Abimelech. into the house of Abimelech.

The denunciation of the traitor:

Quid gloriáris in malí- **W**hy dost thou glory in
 tia, * práepotens in- malice, thou mighty
 fámis? one in infamy?

Omni témpore 4 medi- All the time thou dost 125

- Psalm* 51 t̃aris perñiciem, * lingua meditare ruin, thy tongue
tua est velut noṽacula is like a sharp razor, thou
ac̃uta, patr̃ator doli. worker of deceit.
- 5 D̃iligis malum magis Thou lovest evil rather
quam bonum, * mend̃a- than good, falsehood rather
cium magis quam loqui than to speak right things
justa.
- 6 D̃iligis omnes serm̃ones Thou lovest all speeches
perñicĩosos, * lingua do- that may do hurt. O guile-
l̃osa!— ful tongue!
- 7 Ideo Deus d̃estruet te, * Therefore will God destroy
in sempit̃ernum te re- thee, he will take thee away
moṽebit, forever,
 Extrahet te de tent̃orio He will snatch thee from
 * et eradicabit te de ter- thy tent, and uproot thee
 ra viṽentium.— out of the land of the living.

The prediction of Doeg's ruin:

- 8 Vid̃ebunt just̃i et tim̃e- The just shall see and
bunt * et de illo rid̃e- fear, and shall laugh at
bunt: him:
- 9 "Ecce homo qui non "Behold the man who
statuit * Deum pr̃esi- made not God his strong-
dium suum, hold,
 Sed sper̃avit in multi- But trusted in the abun-
t̃udine divitiarum sũa- d̃ance of his riches, and
rum, * inṽaluit scel̃eri- grew powerful by his
bus suis." crimes."

The lot and conduct of David under God's protection:

- 10 Ego autem sicut ol̃iva But I am like a green
virens in domo Dei; * olive-tree in the house of
confido in miseric̃ordia God; I put my trust in the
Dei in sempit̃ernum. goodness of God forever.
- 11 Celebr̃abo te in s̃acu- I will praise thee forever
lum, quia egisti, et pr̃e- because thou hast done it
dic̃abo nomen tuum, * and I will proclaim thy
quia bonum est, in con- name, for it is good, in the
sp̃ectu sanct̃orum tũo- sight of thy faithful.
rum.

Commentary

Psalm

52

David denounces the deceitful detractor and warns that God will surely destroy him. (verse 6, Hebrew: "You love devouring words, O deceitful tongue!")

8-11: The just shall rejoice when God punishes such men. And the psalmist himself, because of his trust in God, shall prosper as a green olive tree in the house of God, and sing the praises of God's goodness to his favored ones.

Reflection

All men are our brothers for God is the Father of all. Have towards them the same charity which God has shown you!

PSALM 52

Universal Corruption

For the Gift of Understanding

A picture of the universal corruption of men. If the godless do not return to their senses, they shall not escape the divine punishments.

A complaint because of the universal depravity of men:

Magistro chori. Davidis.

For the choir-master. To the melody of "Mahalat." A maskil of David.

Dicit insípiens in corde suo: * "Non est Deus."

The fool says in his heart: "There is no God."

Corrúpti sunt, abominanda egérunt; * non est, qui fáciat bonum.

They are corrupt, they have done things that must be abhorred; there is not one that does what is good.

Deus de cælo própíciat super filios hóminum, * ut vídeat, num sit qui intélligat et quærat Deum.

God looks down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there be one who understands and seeks God.

The condign punishment of the wicked:

Omnes simul aberrarérunt, depraváti sunt; non est qui fáciat bonum, non est nec unus.—

All have gone astray together, they are turned to wickedness; there is not one that does what is right, there is not even one.

Psalm Nonne resipíscunt, qui Will they not return to
 53 faciunt iniquitátem, * their senses, they that do
 qui dévorant pópulum evil, that eat up my people
 meum, sicut cómedunt as they eat bread, that call
 panem, non invocant not upon God?
 Deum?

- 6 Ibi trepidavérunt timó- They trembled with fear,
 re, * ubi non erat timor, where there was no fear.
 Quóniam Deus dissipá- For God had scattered the
 vit ossa eórum, qui te bones of them that were
 obsidébant; * confúsi camped against thee; they
 sunt, quóniam Deus ab- are put to shame, because
 jécit eos.— God has cast them off.

A prayer for the deliverance of Israel:

- 7 Utinam véniat ex Sion Oh, may the salvation of
 salus Israél! Cum vér- Israel come forth from
 terit Deus sortem pópuli Sion! When the Lord shall
 sui, * exsultábit Jacob, change his people's lot,
 lætábitur Israél. Jacob shall be joyful, Israel
 glad.

Commentary

This psalm is the same substantially as psalm 13—except the divine name “Elohim” (“God”) is used instead of “Yahweh” (traditionally translated “Lord”), and that the verses from Romans found in psalm 13 are not found here. Verse 6 also differs in expression from verses 5-6 of psalm 13.

Reflection

Our chief concern in life should be how we stand in the sight of God. If our actions please him, we need not worry about the esteem in which our fellow-men may or may not hold us.

PSALM 53

Unfailing Support

For Those Whose Life Is Threatened

A prayer for help in imminent peril. The psalmist is confident that his enemies will not prevail, and that the evil they plot against him will recoil on themselves.

The title of the psalm:

128 Magistro chori. Fidibus. Da- For the choir-master. On
 vidis, 2 postquam Ziphæi ad stringed instruments. A maskit

Saul venerunt dicentes: "Ecce, of David. When the men of Ziph came to Saul saying: "Behold, David apud nos abditus latet." David is hidden among us." *Psalm*

53

A prayer for help against foes:

Deus, in nómine tuo **O** God, save me by thy
salvum me fac, * et name, and plead my
virtúte tua age causam cause by thy might.
meam.

Deus, audi oratióem **O** God, hear my prayer,
meam; * áuribus pérci- give ear to the words of my
pe verba oris mei. mouth.

Nam supérbi insurrexé- For proud men have risen
runt contra me, et vio- against me, and violent
lénti quæsiérunt vitam men have sought my life;
meam; * non proposué- they have not set God be-
runt Deum ante óculos fore their eyes.
suos.—

A vow of thanksgiving in confidence of deliverance:

Ecce, Deus áduvat me, Behold, God helps me; the
* Dóminus susténtat vi- Lord is the support of my
tam meam. life.

Retórque malum in ad- Make the evil to recoil up-
versários meos, * et pro- on my enemies, and in thy
fidelitáte tua déstrue il- faithfulness destroy them.
los.

Voluntárie sacrificábo I will freely sacrifice to
tibi, * celebrábo nomen thee; I will praise thy
tuum, Dómine, quia bo- name, O Lord, for it is good.
num est.

Nam ex omni tribula- For he has delivered me
tióne erípuit me, * et out of all trouble, and mine
inimícos meos confúsos eye has seen my enemies
vidit óculus meus, put to shame.

Commentary

The title ascribes this psalm to David and gives as its occasion an attempt to betray David into the hands of Saul (cf. 1 Kings 23, 19; 26, 1). The psalmist prays to be delivered from plots against his life.

6-9: He is certain that the Lord will foil the plotters. Then he will offer thanksgiving sacrifices for his rescue.

Psalm

Reflection

54 **A**lways have the greatest respect for the sacred name of "Jesus," our Saviour. Never profane it. "the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven, on earth and under the earth" (Phil 2, 10).

PSALM 54

Cry for Relief

To Overcome the Fear of Death

David's cruel enemies, and his disloyal friend. Foremost among his enemies is one who was formerly his intimate companion. The psalmist pleads for help, and exhorts himself to trust in God.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Fidibus. Davidis. For the choir-master. On stringed instruments. A maskil of David.

An appeal for help in distress:

- 2 **A**uribus percipe, Deus, **G**ive ear to my prayer, O orationem meam, nec **G**od, hide not thyself te subtraxeris supplicationi meae, * 3 attende to me and hearken to me mihi et exaudi me.

Agitor in angore meo, * I am driven hither and et conturbor 4 propter thither in my anguish. And vocem inimici, ob clamorem peccatoris. I am troubled because of the voice of the foe, and the cry of the sinner;

Quoniam inferunt mihi mala * et in ira me infestant. For they bring down evil upon me, and with anger they attack me.

- 5 Cor meum conturbatur in me, * et pavor mortis cadit super me. My heart is troubled with in me, and the terror of death falls upon me.

- 6 Timor et tremor veniunt super me, * et operit me horror. Fear and trembling are come upon me, and horror overwhelms me.

130 Et dico: o si habérem And I say: Oh, had I wings

pennas sicut colúmba, * like a dove, I would fly away *Psalm*
 avolárem et quiéscerem; and be at rest;
 Ecce, longe discéderem, Lo, I would go far away, **54**
 * manérem in desérto. I would abide in the wilder-
 ness.

Quærerem cito perfú- Swiftly would I seek ref-
 gium mihi * a túrbine uge for myself from the
 et procélla.— whirlwind and the storm.

An outburst of indignation at his enemies:

Díssipa, Dómine, dívide Scatter, divide their ton-
 linguas eórum; * nam gues, O Lord; for I see strife
 vídeo violéntiam et dis- and discord in the city.
 córdiam in civitáte:

Dle ac nocte circúme- Day and night they make
 unt eam super muros rounds of its ramparts, and
 ejus, * et iníquitas et wickedness and injustice
 oppréssio sunt in médio are in its midst.
 ejus.

Insídiæ sunt in médio Plots are in its midst, and
 ejus, * et de platéis ejus violence and deceit do not
 non recédunt injúria et depart from its streets.
 dolus.

Si inimícus exprobrás- If an enemy had insulted
 set mihi, * sustinuísem me, truly I would have
 útique; borne it;

Si is, qui odit me, con- If he that hates me, had
 tra me insurrexísset, * risen against me, I would
 abscondíssem me ab eo. have hidden from him.

Sed eras tu, sodális me- But it was thou, my com-
 us, * amícus et familiár- rade, my friend, and fa-
 ris meus, miliar,

Quocum dulce hábui With whom I had sweet
 consórtium, * in domo companionship; in the
 Dei ambulávimus in cœ- house of God we walked
 tu festívo. with the festive throng.

Trustful confidence in God:

Irruat mors super illos, May death rush upon
 vivéntes ad ínferos de- them, living, may they go
 scéndant, * quóniam down to the abode of the **131**

- Psalm* nequitiæ in habitatióibus eórum, in médio eórum!
- 54** dead, for there is wickedness in their dwellings, in their midst!
- 17 Ego autem ad Deum clamábo, * et Dóminus salvábit me. But I will cry unto God. and the Lord will rescue me.
- 18 Véspere et mane et merídie lamentábor et gemam, * et áudiet vocem meam. Evening and morning and noon I will lament and groan, and he will hear my voice.
- 19 Rédimet in pacem ánimam meam ab iis qui me inféstant: * nam multi sunt contra me. He will deliver me in peace from them that assail me: for many are against me.
- 20 Audiet Deus, deprimétque eos, qui regnat ab ætérno; * neque enim mutántur nec timent Deum: God, who reigns from eternity, will hear and he will bring them low; for there is no change in them and they do not fear God.
- 21 Exténdit suas quisque manus contra familiáres suos, * víolat pactum suum. Each stretches forth his hand against his fellows: he breaks his sworn faith.
- 22 Blándior butýro est fácies ejus, * sed cor ejus pugnax. His face is smoother than butter, but his heart is bent upon war.
- Mollióres óleo sunt sermones ejus, * sed sunt gládii stricti. His words are softer than oil, but they are drawn swords.
- 23 Prójice super Dóminum curam tuam, et ipse te sustentábit: * non sinet in perpétuum vacilláre justum. Cast thy care upon the Lord, and he will uphold thee: he will never allow the just man to totter.
- 24 Et tu, Deus, dedúces eos * in púteum intéri-tus; And thou, O Lord, wilt bring them down to the pit of death;
- 132 Viri sánguinum et dolósi non complébunt di- Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their

midium diérum suórum, days, but I hope in thee, O *Psalm*
 * ego autem spero in te, Lord.
 Dómine.

55

Commentary

The psalmist (David according to the title) seems here to be describing the same treachery that is described in psalm 40 (compare 40, 10 with verses 13-15 and 22 of this psalm). He first cries out to God in anguish of persecution. He would fly as a dove to hide in the desert until God comes to his aid.

10-15: Seeing his city in the grip of violence, he smarts especially under the treachery of his trusted friend.

16-22: He calls upon God to destroy such men. The psalmist then quietly resolves to be trustingly persistent in his prayers for peaceful deliverance. The eternal God will surely punish the wicked, for they have treacherously broken the agreement they made with smooth and oily words (according to the sense of the Hebrew of verse 21 and 22: The traitor "raised his hand against those with whom he swore peace; he violated his treaty. His mouth was smoother than butter . . . but war was in his heart" etc.).

23-24: The psalm closes with an exhortation to trust the Lord to restore the balance of justice.

Reflection

We Christians, enlightened by the grace of our Redeemer, do not rejoice over the disastrous fate of our enemies. While appealing to the justice of God against them, in the charity of the New Law we pray for them.

PSALM 55

Confidence Unshaken

For Grace in Temptation

Prayer of David in danger. Although constantly sought after by his enemies, he puts his firm trust in God, relying upon his promise.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori, Davidis. Cum For the choir-master. To the Philistæi eum tenerent in melody of "The silent dove of them that are afar off." A Gath.

A miktam of David. When the Philistines held him captive in Gath.

Trust in God against numerous and bitter enemies:

Miserére mei, Deus, **H**ave mercy on me, O
 nam concúlcát me **H** God, for man treads me 133

Psalm homo, * perpétuo pu- down, always fighting he
gnans opprimit me. oppresses me.

55 Concúlcant me inimíci My foes tread me down all
mei perpétuo, * quón- the time, for many fight
iam multi pugnant ad- against me.
vérsus me.

Altíssime, ⁴ quo die in- O Most High, in the day
vâdet me timor, * ego when fear comes upon me,
in te confidam. I will trust in thee.

⁵ In Deo, cujus célebro In God, whose promise I
promíssum, in Deo con- praise, in God I put my
fido, non timébo: * quid trust, I will not fear: what
fáciét mihi caro? — will man do unto me?

A description of his distress, and a prayer for help:

⁶ Toto die obtréctant mi- All day long they dispar-
hi, * advérsus me sunt age me, all their thoughts
omnes cogitatiónes eó- are against me, unto evil
rum, ad malum.

⁷ Convéniant, insidián- They gather together,
tur, vestigia mea obsér- they lie in wait, they
vant, * quæréntes vitam watch my footprints, seek-
meam. ing my life.

⁸ Pro iniquitáte repénde Requite them for the
illis, * in ira pópulos wickedness; in wrath, O
prostérne, Deus. Lord, cast down the peo-
ples.

⁹ Exsílíi mei vias tu no- Thou hast taken note of
tásti; reconditæ sunt the ways of my exile; my
lácrimæ meæ in utre tears are gathered in thy
tuo: * nonne consigná- water-bag: are they not
tæ in libro tuo? written in thy book?

¹⁰ Tunc recédent inimíci Then my foes shall fall
mei retrórsum, quando- back, whenever I call upon
cúmque invocávero te; * thee; by this I know well
hoc probe scio Deum es- that God is for me.
se pro me.

134 In Deo, cujus célebro In God, whose promise I
promíssum, ¹² in Deo con- praise, in God I trust, I will

affido, non timébo: * quid not fear: what shall man *Psalm*
faciet mihi homo?— do to me?

56

A promise of thanksgiving:

Téneor votis, Deus, quæ I am held by vows which
fecit tibi, * persolvam I made to thee, O God, I
tibi sacrificia laudis, I will offer unto thee sacri-
fices of praise.

Quóniam eripuísti vi- For thou hast delivered
tam meam de morte, et my life from death, and my
pedes meos de lapsu, * feet from falling, that I
ut ámbulem coram Deo might walk before God in
in lúmine vivéntium. the light of the living.

Commentary

This psalm is a prayer composed, according to the title, by David when he was a fugitive in Gath (cf. 1 Kings 21, 10ff.) The psalmist cries for divine relief from the enemy who troubles upon him; but he knows no man can do him serious harm, since he trusts in God.

6-12: The constant thought of his enemies is bent on his destruction. He asks if his trust in the face of tribulation is not remembered (verse 9 in the Hebrew: "Thou keepest record of my wanderings. My tears are kept in thy bottle; are they not in thy book?") He repeats that no man can do him serious harm, since he trusts in God.

13-14: He then makes a vow to offer thanksgiving when God shall rescue him from this deadly danger.

Reflection

The temporary trials and evils of this life, hard and grievous as they may be, are nothing compared with the everlasting happiness of heaven. God permits our crosses that we may prepare ourselves for eternity.

PSALM 56

A Plea for Mercy

Affirming Our Confidence in God

Trust in God in the midst of danger. The psalmist sings the praises of the divine perfections of goodness and faithfulness, which are the foundations of his trust.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the
"Ne destruxeris." Davidis. melody of "Destroy not." A 135

Psalm Quando a Saul in cavernam fugit. miktam of David. When he fled into a cave from Saul.

56

A plea for help in his perils:

2 **M**iserere mei, Deus, **H**ave mercy on me, O miserere mei, * quia **H** God, have mercy on æd te cõfugit ánima mea, me, for my soul seeks refuge in thee,

Et in umbram alárum tuárum confúgio, * donec transeat calámitas. And in the shadow of thy wings I seek refuge, till the disaster be past.

3 Clamo ad Deum altíssimum, * ad Deum qui bene facit mihi. I cry unto God the Most High, to God my benefactor.

4 Mittat de cælo et salvet me, opprobriis afficiat eos qui me persequuntur; * mittat Deus grátiam suam et fidelitatem. May he send from heaven and save me, may he bring shame upon them that persecute me; may God send his grace and faithfulness.

5 In médio leónum decumbo, * qui ávide devorant filios hóminum. I lie down in the midst of lions, who hungrily devour the sons of men.

Dentes eórum sunt lanceæ et sagittæ, * et lingua eórum gládus acútus. Their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

6 Excelsus appare super cælos, Deus; * super omnem terram sit glória tua.— Be thou exalted above the heavens, O God, may thy glory be above all the earth.

A promise of thanksgiving for his deliverance:

7 Rete paraverunt gressibus meis: * depresserunt ánimam meam; They laid a snare for my steps: they bowed down my soul;

Foderunt ante me fossam: * cadant in eam. They dug a pit before me, may they fall into it.

8 Firmum est cor meum, Deus, firmum cor meum; * cantábo et psallam. My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast. I will sing and make melody.

Evigila, ánima mea; Awake, O my soul; awake, *Psalm*
 evigilate, psaltérium et psaltery and harp! I will
 cithara! * excitábo auró- arouse the dawn. **57**
 ram.

Laudábo te in pópulis, I will praise thee among
 Dómine; * psallam tibi the peoples, O Lord; I will
 in natió nibus, sing of thee among the
 nations.

Quóniam magna est For thy mercy is great
 usque ad cælum mise- even unto heaven, and thy
 ricórdia tua, * et usque faithfulness even unto the
 ad nubes fidélitas tua. clouds.

Excélsus appáre super Be thou exalted above the
 cælos, Deus; * super heavens, O God, may thy
 omnem terram sit glória glory be above all the
 tua! earth!

Commentary

The title of this psalm would indicate that David wrote it commemorating his hiding in caves when Saul sought his life (cf. 1 Kings 22 and 24). The psalmist calls upon God to deliver him in his mercy, sheltering him under his wings from his bitter persecutors. Then, in a refrain, he extols the glory of God.

7-12: The prayer is answered. His enemies have fallen into their own trap. So the psalmist has no fear, and rouses his spirit to praise God before all the world. For God's goodness and fidelity are boundless. He closes with the refrain extolling the glory of God.

Reflection

God, who is perfect, is not the cause of the evil that is found in the world. Evil comes from the defects inherent in every created being, who by its very nature is less than God and therefore imperfect.

PSALM 57

Injustice Condemned

For the Righteous Exercise of Authority

The psalmist utters a scathing condemnation against unjust judges. They are deaf to all remonstrances. The vengeance of God, the just judge, awaits them.

Psalm

57

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the melody of "Destroy not." A miktam of David.

A remonstrance with the unjust judges:

- 2 **N**um vere dicitis jus, **D**o you truly speak justice, ye powerful ones? * num judicatis recte, filii hominum? Do you judge rightly, ye sons of men?
- 3 Immo in corde iniquitates patratis, * in terra injustitias dispensant manus vestrae. No, in your hearts you devise evils, your hands deal out injustices in the land.
- 4 Deviaverunt impii inde a sinu matris, * inde ab utero erraverunt, qui mendacium dicunt. From the mother's womb the wicked have departed from the way, from their birth they that speak lies have gone astray.
- 5 Venenum est illis simile veneno serpentis, * veneno aspidis surdae, the poison of the serpent, the poison of the deaf adder, quae aures suas obturat, that stops up its ears.
- 6 Ne audiat vocem fascinatorum, * incantatoris incantantis perire.— Lest it hear the voice of the charmers, of the wizard when he skilfully chants his charms.

The punishment of these wicked men.

- 7 Deus, conterere dentes eorum in ore ipsorum; * molares leonum confringe, Domine. O God, crush their teeth in their mouth; break, O God, the great teeth of the lions.
- 8 Dissolvantur quasi aquae, quae defluunt; * si dirigunt sagittas suas, sint velut obtusae. May they melt like the waters that flow away; may their arrows, if they shoot them, be as if blunted.
- 9 Transeant sicut limax, quae diffuit, * quasi foetus abortivus mulieris, qui solem non vidit. May they pass like the snail that melts away, like a woman's untimely birth that sees not the sun.

138 Priusquam ollae vestrae Before your pots feel the

senserint veprem, * dum thorn-bush, may the hot *Psalm*
est viridis, æstus túrbi- blast of the whirlwind
nis abripiat eum. carry it away while it is yet **58**
green.

Lætábitur justus, cum The just man shall rejoice
viderit vindictam, * pe- when he sees the venge-
des suos lavábit in sán- ance, he will bathe his feet
guine iníqui. in the blood of the wicked
man.

Et dicent hómines: Uti- And men shall say: "Veri-
que est fructus justo, * ly there is a reward for the
utique est Deus, júdi- just man, in truth there is
cans in terra. a God that judges on the
earth!"

Commentary

The psalm (Davidic according to title) upbraids the rulers who work injustice. They are hardened in their perversity, deaf to good advice.

7-12: So God will render them incapable of harm, (he will break their teeth") by bringing about their complete and sudden destruction. (verse 10, Hebrew: "Before your pots can feel the thorns"—i.e., the fire of the thorn-bushes which give quick heat—"May the heat of the whirlwind sweep them away while they are still green." A figure for unexpected suddenness). The innocent sufferers will then rejoice on seeing God's vengeance; they will say that the just are really rewarded and God does judge sinners after all.

Reflection

Those entrusted with authority should always bear in mind the words of our Lord to Pilate: "Thou wouldst have no power at all over me were it not given thee from above" (John 19, 11).

PSALM 58

God Is My Might

For Firm Trust in Great Danger

Prayer for help against ruthless foes. In the midst of bloodthirsty enemies the psalmist maintains his poise by firm confidence in God. The divine power and mercy are his shield.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the
"Ne destruxeris." Davidis. melody of "Destroy not." A **139**

Psalm 58 Quando Saul viros misit qui domum observarent, ut eum occiderent. *miktam of David.* When Saul sent men to watch the house in order to murder him.

A prayer for deliverance from unjust pursuers:

- 2 **E**ripe me de inimicis meis, Deus meus, * **D**eliver me from my foes, O my God, guard me ab insurgentibus contra me tuere me. from them that rise up against me.
- 3 Eripe me de patrántibus iniquitatem, * et a viris sanguínum salva me. Deliver me from them that work iniquity, and save me from bloody men.
- 4 Ecce enim insidiántur vitæ meæ, * conspirant contra me poténtes. For, lo, they are lying in wait to take my life, powerful men plot against me.
- Non est crimen in me nec peccátum Dómine: * sine culpa mea procúrrunt et aggrediúntur. There is neither crime nor sin in me, O Lord: Without fault of mine they run hither and fall upon me.
- Evígila, occúrre mihi, et vide; * ⁶ nam tu, Dómine exercítuum, Deus Israél es. Awake, come to meet me, and see; for thou, O Lord of hosts, art the God of Israel.
- Expergíscere, castíga omnes gentes, * noli miseréri ómnium perfidórum. Rise up, chastise all the nations, have no pity for any of the traitors.

His enemies are treacherous, but he trusts in God:

- 7 Revertúntur vésperæ, latrant ut canes * et percúrrunt civitátem; They come back in the evening, they howl like dogs and make the rounds of the city;
- 8 Ecce se jactant ore suo; contuméliæ sunt in lábiis eórum: * “Quis enim audit?” Behold, they boast with their mouths; insults are on their lips: “For who hears?”
- 9 Sed tu, Dómine, irrídes eos, * ludíbrio habes omnes gentes. But thou, O Lord, dost laugh at them, thou dost mock at all the heathens.

■ Robur meum, ad te at- To thee, my might, will I *Psalm*
 —éndam, quia tu, Deus, turn, for thou, O God, art **58**
 —præsídium meum es, * my stronghold, O my God,
 —Deus meus, misericórdia my mercy!
 —ne.

■ Subvéniat mihi Deus, * May God come to my help.
 —fáciat ut delécter de hó- May he give me to gloat
 —stibus meis. over my enemies.

— *The rage of his enemies contrasted with his trust in God:*

■ Deus, occíde eos, ne of- Kill them, O God, lest they
 —fénsæ sint pópulo meo,* be hateful to my people,
 —contúrba eos róbores tuo throw them into confusion
 —et prostérne eos, clipeus by thy power and bring
 —noster, Dómine. them down, O Lord, our
 shield.

■ Peccátum oris eórum The sin of their mouth is
 —est sermo labiórum eó- the speech of their lips, and
 —rum, * et capiántur su- let them be caught in
 —pérbia sua et maledíctis their own pride, and in the
 —et mendáciis quæ di- curses and lies which they
 —cunt. utter.

■ Perde eos in ira, perde, Destroy them in wrath,
 —ut jam non sint, * ut destroy them so that they
 —scíátur Deum regnáre in be no more, so that it be
 —Jacob et usque ad fines known that God reigns
 —terræ. over Jacob and as far as the
 ends of the earth.

■ Revertúntur véspere, They come back in the
 —atránt ut canes, * et evening, they howl like
 —percúrrunt civitátem; dogs and make the rounds
 of the city;

■ Vagántur cibum quæ- They prowl about, looking
 —réntes; * si satiáti non for food; they howl if they
 —sunt, ululátum edunt. are not filled.

■ Ego autem cantábo po- But I will sing of thy
 —téntiam tuam, * et ex- might, and in the morning
 —sultábo mane de miseri- I will rejoice in thy mercy,
 —córdia tua,

■ Quia factus es præsídi- Because thou hast become 141

Psalm 59 um mihi, * et refúgium a stronghold to me, and :
die angustiae meae. refuge in the day of my dis-
tress.

18 Robur meum, tibi psal- O my might, I will glorify
lam, quia, Deus, prae- thee in my song, for thou
dium meum es, * Deus O God, art my stronghold
meus, misericórdia mea. my God, my mercy.

Commentary

David, so the title identifies the psalmist here, appeals to God for rescue from bloodthirsty pursuers. Since he has done nothing to deserve such persecution he calls upon "the God of hosts to arise and punish these wicked men."

7-11: His enemies prowl like hungry dogs, noisily boasting of their security in wickedness. But the Lord laughs at the futility. He is the protector who comes to the aid of the psalmist in his goodness.

12-14: God will vindicate the psalmist by scattering the wicked and trapping them in their own pride and evil speech. Thus all men will realize that God is the master of Israel and of the earth.

15-18: So will they prowl like hungry dogs; but the psalmist will praise the power and goodness of God, who is the protector who comes to the aid of the psalmist in his goodness.

Reflection

St. Gregory the Great commenting on the words of David in this psalm says: "Let us recall before our eyes the evils which we have done, and ponder how great is that goodness of God by which we are tolerated. Let us mark what are the bowels of his loving-kindness, that he does not merely pardon our faults, but promises the kingdom of heaven to penitents even after their faults" (Homily 18 on the Gospels).

PSALM 59

Hope in Defeat

To Obtain Strength in Temptation

A prayer for Israel in serious distress. The people have suffered a great defeat, yet the psalmist conceives new hope for them in the remembrance of God's promises.

The title of the psalm:

1 Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the melody of "The lily of the law."
"Lilium legis." Davidis. Ad docendum. 2 Quando contra A miktam of David, to teach
Aram Naharaim et contra When he went forth against

Aram Soba egressus est, et quando Joab reversus devicit Edom in valle salis: 12000 (hominum).

Aram Naharaim and against Aram Soba, and when Joab came back and defeated Edom in the valley of salt: 12000 (men). *Psalms* 59

David complains to God:

Deus, reppulisti nos, perfregisti ácies nostras, * irátus es: restitue nos.

Concussisti terram, scidisti eam; * sana rupturas ejus: nam vacillat.

Imposuisti pópulo tuo dura; * potásti nos vino inebriánti.

Statuísti timéntibus te vexillum, * ut fúgerent ab arcu;

Ut liberéntur dilécti tui, * ádjuva délixtera tua, et exáudi nos.—

O God, thou hast rejected us, thou hast broken our battle lines, thou hast been angry: restore us.

Thou hast shaken the earth, thou hast riven it: heal its breaches; for it quakes.

Thou hast laid hard trials upon thy people; thou hast made us to drink of a heady wine.

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that they might flee from the bow;

That those thou lovest might be delivered, help with thy right hand, and hear us.

God's promise of complete victory:

Deus locútus est in santuário suo: * “Exsultabo et partibor Sichem, et vallem Succoth dimétiar.

Mea est terra Gálaad, et mea terra Manásse, * et Ephraim gálea cápitis mei, Juda sceptrum meum,

Moab pelvis lotiónis meæ; super Edom ponam calceaméntum me-

God has spoken in his holy place: “I will exalt and I will divide Sichem, and I will measure the valley of Succoth.

Mine is the land of Galaad and mine the land of Manasses, and Ephraim is my headpiece, Juda my scepter.

Moab is the bowl wherein I wash; on Edom I cast my sandal; I will triumph over

Psalm um, * de Philistæa trium- Philistaea."
phábo."—

60

A prayer of confidence:

- 11 Quis addúcet me in ci- Who will lead me into the
vitátem munitam? * quis walled city? Who will lead
dedúcet me usque in me even into Edom?
Edom?
- 12 Nonne tu, Deus, qui Wilt not thou, O God, who
reppulísti nos, * nec jam didst cast us off, wilt not
egréderis, Deus, cum ex- thou go forth with our
ercitibus nostris? armies?
- 13 Da nobis auxílium con- Give us thy help against
tra inimícum, * quia the foe, for man's help is
vanum est subsídium vain.
hóminum.
- 14 Per Deum fórtiter agé- Through God we shall do
mus, * et ipse concul- bravely, and he will crush
cábit inimícos nostros. our foes.

Commentary

The title explains this psalm as having been written by David during his wars against the Syrians (cf. 2 Kings 8; 10, 6ff 1 Par. 18 ff). The psalmist describes the broken state of his people and land. Yet they will escape the weapons of the foes for they pray for salvation from the hand of God.

8-10: God has sworn that he will hold his land, the land of Sichern, Succoth (so the Hebrew), Gilead, Manasses, Ephraim and Juda. As for Moab, the enemy nation, it shall be as God washing pot (so the Hebrew in verse 10); Edom shall be crushed under his sandal; Philistæa shall be subject to him.

11-14: Realizing this the psalmist longs to march against Edom. But he turns again to God for assurance that he has not deserted the armies of Israel. If God is with them they will bravely crush their foes.

Reflection

God sends us tribulations to rouse us to good works; he humbles us in order to bring us to the kingdom of heaven.

PSALM 60

The King's Prayer

To Obtain Peace in God

holy city, for he is certain to enjoy the divine protection there.

Psalms

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Fidibus. Da- For the choir-master. On
vidis. stringed instruments. Of David.

60

David longs to return to the Sanctuary:

Audi, Deus, clamórem **O** God, hear my cry,
meum, * inténde ora- hearken to my prayer.
tióni meæ.

Ab extrémis terræ ad From the ends of the earth
te clamo, * cum déficit I cry unto thee when I am
cor meum. faint of heart.

In petram extóllés me, Thou wilt lift me up on a
dabis quiétem mihi, * rock, thou wilt give me rest,
quia præsidium es mihi, for thou art a refuge for
turreis fortis contra ini- me, a strong tower against
mícum. the foe.

Utinam hábitem in ta- Oh, that I may dwell for-
bernáculo tuo semper, * ever in thy tabernacle, and
confúgiam sub tegmen find refuge under the shelt-
alárum tuárum!— er of thy wings!

A prayer for a long life, and a promise of thanksgiving:

Tu enim, Deus, audísti For thou, O God, hast
vota mea; * dedísti mihi heard my pleadings; thou
hereditátem timéntium hast given me the inherit-
nomen tuum. ance of them that fear thy
name.

Dies ádice ad dies re- Add days to the days of
gis, * anni ejus æquent the king, let his years be
generatiónes multas; equal to many generations;

Regnet in ætérnum co- Let him reign before God
ram Deo; * grátiam et forever; send grace and
fidelitátem mitte, ut faithfulness to guard him!
conservent eum.

Sic cantábo nomen tu- So I will sing to thy name
um semper, * et solvam forever, and every day I
vota meá omni die. will pay my vows.

Commentary

The psalmist (the title again identifies him as David) here composes a prayer of trust. He calls from his troubled exile

Psalm to God that God will establish him. He longs to dwell in God's House, under the cover of his wings.

61

6-9: Knowing that God will surely grant his prayer, he prays especially for the King, asking long life, a long reign, protected by the angels of Kindness and Truth (so the sense of the Hebrew in verse 8). So he will always praise God, daily fulfilling his vows.

Reflection

As David, an exile, longed to return to the Holy City, so should we, exiles in this world, keep our eyes constantly on heaven in a longing to be with Christ.

PSALM 61

Our Sole Refuge

To Obtain the Grace of Confidence in God

David is beset by enemies who would destroy him as one casts down a tottering wall. Yet he feels secure in God's care, and he tells the people to put all their trust in God.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Secundum Iduthun. Psalmus. Davidis. For the choir-master. After the manner of Idithun. A psalm of David.

Amid hostile slanderers, secure in God's care:

- 2 **I**n Deo tantum quiescit. **O**nly in God is my soul at
 ánima mea, * ab ipso rest, from him comes
 venit salus mea. my salvation,
 3 Ipse tantum est petra. Only he is my rock and my
 mea et salus mea, * præ-salvation, my stronghold:
 sidium meum: nequá-I shall nowise be moved.
 quam movébor.
 4 Quousque irrúitis in hó- How long will you rush
 minem, subvértitis eum upon a man, all of you, and
 omnes, * ut parietem throw him down, like a
 inclinátum, ut murum leaning rampart, like a tot-
 ruéntem? tering wall?
 5 Profécito e loco meo ex- Verily, they plot to cast me
 célsó moliúntur me pél- down from my high place.
 lere, * delectántur men- they delight in falsehood:
 dácio;
 146 Ore suo benedícunt, * et They bless with their

in corde maledícunt.— mouth, and they curse *Psalm*
within their heart.

61

A repetition of confidence in God:

In Deo tantum quíesce, Only in God be at rest, O
ánima mea, * quia ab my soul, for my hope comes
ipso venit quod spero. from him.

Ipse tantum est petra Only he is my rock and my
mea et salus mea, * præ- salvation, my stronghold:
sídium meum: non mo- I shall not be moved.
vébor.

Penes Deum est salus With God is my salvation
mea et glória mea, * and my glory, the rock of
petra róboris mei: refú- my strength: my refuge is
gium meum in Deo. in God.

Spera in eo, pópule, O thou people, hope in
omni témpore; effúndite him at all times; pour out
coram eo corda vestra: * your hearts before him:
Deus est refúgium nobis! God is a refuge for us!

The vanity of all human help:

Hálitus tantum sunt fí- The sons of men are only
lii hóminum, * falláces a breath, the sons of men
filii virórum: are liars:

In statéra in altum They rise high in the
ascéndunt, * levióres scales, lighter than a
quam hálitus omnes si- breath all together.
mul.

Nolíte confídere oppres- Trust not to violence, and
sióni, neque in rapína: glory not in robbery; set
vane gloriári; * ópibus, not your heart upon riches,
si crescant, ne adhæse- if they increase.
ritis corde.

Unum locútus est Deus; One thing God has said;
hæc duo audívi: "Deo these two things I have
poténtia est, ¹³ et tibi, heard: "Might belongs to
Dómine, grátia; * nam God; and to thee, O Lord,
tu reddes unicuíque se- mercy; for thou dost render
cúndum opus ejus." to every man according to
his work."

psalm

Commentary

62

The psalmist here is David according to the title. He expresses his calm resignation to God's will because he knows that God and God alone is his protector. He asks his enemies why they rush to attack him as if he were a crumbling wall trying to tear him down from his height. "They delight in lies" (so the Hebrew in the same verse; the Vulgate reading—"I ran in thirst"—seems to come from a corrupted reading in the Greek text.)

6-9: But the psalmist will be resigned in patience to God's will, for God is his rock and his fortress. He exhorts his people to similar trust.

10-13: For all things human are illusory, and no more valuable than a breath (the sense of the Hebrew of verse 10: "All men, of low and high degree, are of little worth; if all were placed on one side of a balance together, that side would rise"). Human riches, whether unjustly acquired or not, are not the basis of security; for God has said that his power and mercy alone will decide the reward of man's work.

Reflection

St. Gregory the Great has said that humility is the mother and mistress of all virtues, and we must begin by humbling ourselves in the sight of God, that he may lift us up.

PSALM 62

Thirst for God

For the Grace of Devotion in Prayer

A morning prayer that the greatest blessing is the possession of God. It manifests the great fervor and devotion of a soul that is perfectly united with God.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Psalmus. Davidis. cum in deserto Juda commoraretur. A psalm of David, when he sojourned in the wilderness of Juda.

Loving trust in God:

- 2 **D**eus, Deus meus es: * **O** God, thou art my God.
sollícite te quæro; earnestly I seek thee.
Te sitit ánima mea, de- My soul thirsts for thee.
siderat te caro mea, * my flesh longs for thee, like
ut terra árida et sitiens, a dry and thirsty land.
sine aqua. without water.

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Sic in sanctuário con- So do I gaze upon thee in

émplor te, * ut vídeam the sanctuary, to see thy *Psalms*
oténtiam tuam et gló- might and thy glory. **62**
iam tuam.

Quia mélior est grátia For thy mercy is better
ua quam vita, * lábia than life, my lips shall
rea prædicábunt te.— praise thee.

Sic benedicám tibi in So I will bless thee while I
ita mea: * in nómine live: I will lift up my hands
uo attóllam manus in thy name.
reas.

Sicut ádipe et pingué- My soul shall be filled as
ine satiábitur ánima with marrow and fatness,
rea, * et lábiis exsultán- and my mouth shall praise
ibus laudábit os meum, thee with joyful lips.

Cum memor ero tui su- When I will remember
er stratum meum, * in thee on my bed, and medi-
ígiliis meditábor de te. tate on thee in the night
watches.

Etenim factus es adjú- For thou hast become my
or meus, * et in umbra succor, and I exult in the
lárum tuárum exsúlto: shadow of thy wings.

Adhæret ánima mea My soul cleaves to thee,
ibi, * me sustentat dex- thy right hand upholds me.
era tua.—

The overthrow of his enemies, and the triumph of David:

Qui autempérdere quæ- But they that seek to take
unt ánimam meam, * my life, shall go into the
atroíbunt in profúnda depths of the earth.
eiræ.

Tradéntur in manus They shall be delivered to
ládii, * pórtio vúlpium the might of the sword,
runt, they shall be the prey of
jackals.

Rex vero lætábitur in But the king shall rejoice
deo, gloriábitur omnis in God; whoever swears by
ui jurat per eum, * quia him shall glory, because
bstruétur os loquénti- the mouth of those that
m iniqua. speak evil shall be stopped.

Psalm

Commentary

63 **T**he composition of this psalm is ascribed in the title to David on the occasion of his flight from the rebellion of his son Absalom (cf. Psalms 3 and 5). A fugitive in the desert, the psalmist longs to be with God in the magnificence of his sanctuary. For God's good favor is better than life itself.

5-9: This longing springs from a love which brings joy even to the night watches of the fugitive. For he knows that he is ever under the sheltering wings of his protector, and he ever clings to the hand that upholds him.

10-12: He is confident that his enemies will be destroyed. Then he, the King, and all his loyal followers, shall praise God for their salvation from the wicked.

Reflection

Prayer effects a close union between God and man. Through it we constantly think of God and live in him. If we are faithful to prayer, it will create an insatiable thirst for God in us as it did in David.

PSALM 63

Evil Designs Frustrated

For Those Suffering from Men of Ill-will

*God's judgment will overtake the enemies of the just.
Their wicked plans against the innocent are futile.
The latter are therefore strengthened by their trust in God.*

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of David.

A prayer for protection against malicious enemies:

- 2 **A**udi, Deus, vocem meam, dum queror; * **O** God, hear my voice while I utter my
a timóre inimíci custódi vitam meam. plait; guard my life from the fear of the enemy.
- 3 Prótege me a concílio malignórum, * a tumultu agéntium iníqua, Shield me from the council of the wicked, from the uproar of evildoers.
- 4 Qui ácuunt ut gládium linguas suas, * dírigunt ut sagíttas verba venenáta, Who whet their tongues like a sword, who aim their poisoned words like arrows.

Ut fériant ex látebris That from ambush, they *Psalm*
innocéntem, * de im- may strike down the inno- 63
províso fériant eum ni- cent man, that, fearing
hil tíméntes. nothing, they may strike
him unawares.

Fírmiter propónunt si- They are firmly set upon
bi rem malam, conspí- their evil designs, they
rant de láqueis tendén- agree together to lay their
dis occúlte, * dicunt: traps secretly; they say:
“Quis eos vidébit?” “Who will see us?”

Excógitant nefária, oc- They devise wicked plans,
cúltant cogitatiónes ex- they hide the schemes they
cogitátas, * et mens cu- have thought out, and the
júsque et cor sunt pro- thought and heart of each
fúnda.— one is deep.

*Divine judgment will fall on such men to the en-
couragement of the just:*

Sed Deus ferit eos sa- But God strikes them with
gíttis, * de improvíso arrows, they are suddenly
percutiúntur vulnéribus, pierced with wounds,

Et ruínam parat eis And he prepares destruc-
língua ipsórum: * cá- tion for them by their own
pita movent omnes qui tongues: all they that see
vident eos. them shake their heads.

Et omnes timent et And all fear and proclaim
prædicant opus Dei, * the work of God and de-
et perpéndunt acta ejus. liberate on his deeds.

Lætátur justus in Dó- The just man rejoices in
mino et cónfugit ad God and flees to him for
eum, * et gloriántur om- refuge, and all glory that
nes recti corde. are of right heart.

Commentary

The psalmist is David according to the title. He prays to be spared from evil enemies who have sharpened their tongues as swords and are stretching the bow and setting snares to kill him. Their plots are wicked and deep.

8-11: But when they shall have used every scheme, God will make their arrows like those of children and turn their tongues against themselves. So through fear they shall learn the deeds of God; but the righteous shall joyously take refuge in him.

Psalm

64

Reflection

When suffering from the wrongdoings of enemies, remember the words of Isaiah: "Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread" (8, 13).

PSALM 64

God's Manifold Benefits

Gratitude for Spiritual Benefits Received

Thanksgiving to God for his favors and especially for an exceptionally plentiful harvest. The psalmist becomes eloquent in his praises of God's almighty power and loving-kindness.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm and song of David.
Davidis. Canticum.

Duty to thank God for forgiveness of sin:

- 2 Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion * et tibi reddatur votum, qui exáudis preces. To thee is due a song of praise, O God, in Sion and to thee, who hearest prayers, a vow shall be paid.
Ad te omnis caro venit * All flesh comes unto thee because of iniquities.
4 propter iniquitátes. Our sins are heavy upon us; thou forgivest them.
Opprimunt nos delicta nostra: * tu ea dimittis. us; thou choosest and takest he dwells in thy courts.
5 Beátus, quem éligis et assúmis: * inhábitat in átriis tuis. May we be filled with the good things of thy house with the holiness of thy temple.
Satiémur bonis domus tuæ, * sanctitáte templi tui.—

Thanksgiving for his providence in nature and history:

- 6 Signis stupéndis exáudis nos cum justitia, * With justice, by wondrous signs, thou hearest us, O Deus, salvátor noster, God, our Saviour.
Spes ómnium fínium Thou, the hope of all the terræ * et márium procul, ends of the earth and of distant seas,

152 Qui firmas montes vir- Thou, who establishest

túte tua, * accíntus the mountains by thy *Psalm*
poténtia, strength, thou, girt with **64**
might,

Qui compéscis sónitum Who stillest the roaring
maris, * sónitum flúctu- of the sea, the roaring of
um ejus et tumúltum its waves and the tumult
natiónum: of the nations:

Et timent, qui hábitant And they that dwell at the
términos terræ, propter ends of the earth are awed
signa tua; * extrémá at the signs; thou fillest
Oriéntis et Occidéntis with joy the farthest
gáudio reple. bounds of the east and the
west.

God has sent a plentiful harvest:

Visitásti terram et irri- Thou hast visited the
gásti eam, * multum earth and watered it, thou
locupletásti eam. hast greatly enriched it.

Rivus Dei replétus est The brook of God is filled
aquis, parásti frumén- with waters, thou hast pre-
tum córum; * ita enim pared their corn; for so
parásti eam: thou hast prepared it:

Sulcos ejus irrigásti, * Thou hast watered its
complanásti glebas ejus, furrows, thou hast leveled
its clods,

Imbribus eam mollísti, Thou hast softened it with
benedixísti gémini ejus. rains, thou hast blessed its
growth.

Coronásti annum beni- Thou hast crowned the
gnitáte tua, * et sémitæ year with thy loving-kind-
tuæ pinguédinem stil- ness, and thy tracks drip
lant. with fatness.

Stillant páscua desér- The pastures of the wil-
* et colles exsultatíone derness drip, and the hills
se cingunt. gird themselves with glad-
ness.

Vestiúntur grégibus ar- The meadows are clothed
va, et valles operiúntur with flocks, and the valleys
fruménto: * acclámant are covered with corn: they
et cantant. shout for joy and they sing.

Psalm

Commentary

65 **T**he Hebrew assigns this psalm to David; the Vulgate divides the honor of authorship among David, Jeremias, and Ezechiel. The psalmist represents himself as offering thanksgiving in the temple in fulfillment of a vow. God hears prayer and pardons transgressions. Happy is the man whom God calls to be his guest in the temple courts. This the psalmist desires.

6-14: The all-just God is the hope of the wide world—God the mighty Creator who awes the nations and gives joyful beauty and fertility to the universe. He waters the earth with rain and river to provide bountiful crops and pasture for the flocks. He makes all nature sing.

Reflection

Even among men it is a duty to show our appreciation and gratitude for favors received; and the more goodness one has been shown, the more grateful should he be. Who can be compared to God in the many blessings he has showered on us?

PSALM 65

God's Beneficence

For Pious Thoughts during Mass

Thanksgiving to God for his benefits to the chosen people. They were often severely tried by God, but he always brought them relief. The people will offer sacrifices of thanksgiving.

The title of the psalm:

- 1** Magistro chori. Canticum. For the choir-master. A song of Psalmus. A psalm.

All the world is summoned to sing the praises of the God of Israel:

Exultáte Deo, omnes **S**hout joyfully to God, all terræ, ² cantáte glóriam nóminis ejus, * of his name, render glorious praise unto him. laudem præcláram red-
dite ei.

- 3** Dícite Deo: quam stupénda sunt ópera tua! * Say to God: How wonderful are thy works! Be ob magnitúdinem róboris tui blandiúntur tibi thy strength, thy enemies flatter thee.

Tota terra adóret te et
cantet tibi, * cantet no-
men tuum.—

Veníte et vidéte ópera
Dei: * stupénda patrá-
vit inter filios hóminum!

Convértit mare in ári-
dum, pédibus flumen
transiérunt: * ideo læ-
témur de eo!

Dominátur poténtiasua
in ætérnum; óculi ejus
gentes obsérvant: * re-
bélles ne se extóllant.

Benedicite, gentes, Deo
nostro * et annuntiáte
famam laudis ejus,

Qui dedit ánimæ no-
stræ vitam, * nec sinit
commovéri pedem no-
strum.

Nam probásti nos, De-
us; * igne nos examiná-
sti sicut examinátur ar-
géntum;

Induxísti nos in láque-
um; * onus grave im-
posuísti lumbis nostris;

Incédere fecísti hómi-
nes super cápita nostra;
transívimus per ignem
et aquam: * sed relaxa-
tiónem dedísti nobis.

Let all the earth adore *Psalm*
thee and sing unto thee, let
it sing thy name. **65**

Come and see the works
of God: the wondrous
works he did among the
sons of men!

He changed the sea into
dry land; they crossed the
river on foot; therefore let
us rejoice in him!

He reigns by his might
forever; his eyes watch the
nations: let not the rebel-
lious exalt themselves.

Bless our God, ye nations,
and proclaim the fame of
his praise,

Who gave life to our soul,
and did not suffer our foot
to stumble.

For thou didst try us, O
God, thou didst test us by
fire, as silver is tested;

Thou didst lead us into a
snare; thou didst lay upon
our loins a heavy burden;

Thou didst make men ride
over our heads; we passed
through fire and through
water: but thou gavest us
relief.

The psalmist's personal gratitude:

Introíbo domum tuam
cum holocáustis, * red-
dam tibi vota mea,

Quæ protulérunt lábia

I will go into thy house
with burnt-offerings, I will
pay thee my vows,

Which my lips promised **155**

Psalm mea quæque promísit os and my mouth spoke in my
65 meum * in tribulatióne adversity.
 mea.

- 15 Holocáusta óvium pín- I will offer thee burnt
 guium ófferam tibi cum offerings of fat sheep with
 ádipe arietum: * immo- the fat of rams; I will offer
 lábo boves cum hircis. up bulls with young goats.
- 16 Veníte, audíte et nar- Come, hear, all ye that fear
 rábo, omnes qui timétis God, and I will tell how
 Deum, * quanta fécerit great things he has done
 ánimæ meæ! for me!
- 17 Ad ipsum ore meo cla- I cried unto him with my
 mávi, * et laudávi eum mouth, and I praised him
 lingua mea. with my tongue.
- 18 Iniquitátem si inten- If I had designed evil in
 dissem in corde meo, * my heart, the Lord would
 non exaudísset Dómi- not have heard me.
 nus.
- 19 Sed exaudivit Deus: * But God did hear: he gave
 atténdit voci precatiónis heed to the voice of my
 meæ. prayer.
- 20 Benedíctus Deus, qui Blessed be God, who did
 non réppulit precatió- not reject my prayer and
 nem meam * neque amó- did not withdraw his merc
 vit a me misericórdiam from me.
 suam.

Commentary

In this anonymous psalm the psalmist begins by praising the awe-inspiring works of the Lord in subjecting to himself all his foes, and calls on all the earth to adore him.

5-7: An instance of God's work is Israel's crossing of the Red Sea. This is a warning that God is ever watchful over the nations. So they must not rebel.

8-12: He calls upon the nations to praise God's works all as shown in his leading Israel safely through trial and difficulties to abundant peace.

13-15: So the psalmist will fulfill vows made during such trials by offering thanksgiving sacrifices.

16-20: He calls upon all worshipers of God to listen as he recounts all that God has done for him in answer to his innocent prayers, and blesses God for it.

Reflection

Psalm

66

Christ taught us the power of prayer when he said: "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened" (Matt. 7, 7-8).

PSALM 66

Song of Praise

For a Rich Harvest

Thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest, based on the ancient Priestly Blessing. It is also a prayer that all nations may unite in singing the praises of God.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Fidibus. For the choir-master. On
Psalmus. Canticum. stringed instruments. A psalm.
A song.

The people pray that the whole world may know God:

Deus misereatur nostri, **M**ay God have mercy on
et benedicat nobis; * **M**us and bless us; may
serenum præbeat nobis he make his face to shine
vultum suum, upon us,

Ut cognoscant in terra That they may know his
viam ejus, * in omnibus way upon earth, his salva-
gentibus salutem ejus. tion among all the nations.

Celebrent te populi, May the peoples praise
Deus, * celebrent te pó- thee, O God, may all the
puli omnes.— peoples praise thee.

May it acknowledge the God of Israel as the true God:

Lætentur et exsultent May the nations be glad
nationes, quod regis pó- and rejoice, for thou
pulos cum æquitate, * judge the peoples with
et nationes in terra gu- rightness, and thou rulest
bernas. the nations upon earth.

Celebrent te populi, May the peoples praise
Deus, * celebrent te pó- thee, O God, may all the
puli omnes.— peoples praise thee.

The present harvest is the occasion of the psalm:

Terra dedit fructum su- The earth has yielded its 157

Psalm 67: * benedixit nobis fruit: God, our God, has
 Deus, Deus noster. blessed us.
 67 Benedicat nobis Deus,* May God bless us, and
 et timeant eum omnes may all the ends of the
 fines terræ! earth fear him!

Commentary

This psalm, anonymous in the Hebrew, is attributed to David in the Greek and Vulgate. God is asked in his mercy to let his face shine upon Israel, giving her salvation, so that all peoples may know and joyously praise him.

5-6: Then all nations are called to rejoice at the sight of God's just rule over his people and joyously to praise him.

7-8: God has blessed his people with abundant harvest. May he further bless them that all the earth may revere him.

Reflection

We should interest ourselves in the various societies for the propagation of the Faith, and thereby help unbelievers to recognize that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

PSALM 67

Glorious Victories

Thanksgiving for Past Victories

The triumph of God over his foes. The psalm describes the triumphal procession of God in the Ark of the Covenant from Sinai to Mount Zion, whence he extends his rule over the whole world.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Davidis. For the choir-master. A psalm of David. Canticum. of David. A song.

God brings terror to his enemies, joy to the just:

- 2 **E**xsurgit Deus, dissimulat: God arises, his foes
 pântur inimici ejus, are scattered, and they
 * et fûgiunt, qui odérunt that hate him flee from
 eum, a fácie ejus. his presence.
 3 Sicut dispérgitur fumus, dispergúntur, sic they are driven away,
 ut diffluit cera ante ignem, sic péreunt peccatores ante Deum. so wax melts away before the fire, so sinners perish before God.

158 **J**usti autem lætántur, But the just are glad, they

exsultant in conspéctu Dei, * et delectántur in lætítia.— exult in the sight of God, *Psalm* Dei, * et delectántur in and exult with gladness. 67

Praise to God as the protector of his people:

Cantáte Deo, psállite mini ejus; * stérnite viam ei qui véhitur per désertum, Sing unto God, chant a hymn unto his name; make ready the way for him who is borne through the desert,

Cui nomen est Dóminus, * et exsultáte coram eo Whose name is the Lord; and exult before him.

Pater orphanórum et tutor viduárum * Deus est in habitáculo sancto suo. Father of orphans and defender of widows, God is in his holy dwelling.

Deus domum parat derelictis, edúcit captívos ad prosperitátem: * rebelles tantum degunt in tórrida terra.— God prepares a home for the forlorn; he leads forth the captives unto prosperity: the rebellious alone stay in the parched land.

The journey through the desert:

Deus, cum exíres ante pópulum tuum, * cum incéderes per désertum, O God, when thou didst go forth at the head of thy people, when thou didst move through the wilderness,

Terra mota est, cæli quoque stillárunt ante Deum, * trémuit Sínai ante Deum, Deum Israël. The earth was shaken, and the heavens rained before God, Sinai trembled before God, the God of Israel.

Plúviam copiósam demisisti, Deus, in hereditátem tuam, * et fatigáfam tu refecísti. Thou didst let fall a plentiful rain upon thine inheritance, O God, and when it was weary, thou didst renew it.

Grege tuus habitávit in ea, * parásti eam in bo Thy flock dwelt therein, in thy goodness, O God, thou

Psalm nitáte tua páuperi, Deus. didst prepare it for the poor.

67

The conquest of Palestine:

- 12 Dóminus profert ver- The Lord speaks the word,
bum; * læta nuntiánti- the joyful throng of the
um multitúdo est ma- messengers is great:
gna:
13 "Reges exercítuum fú- "The kings of the hosts
giunt, fúgiunt; * et ínco- are fleeing, fleeing, and
læ domus dívidunt præ- they that dwell in the
dam. house divide the spoils.
14 Dum quiescebátis inter While you rested among
caulas gregum, alæ col- the sheepfolds, the wings
lumbæ nitébant argén- of the dove were shining
to, * et pennæ ejus fla- with silver, and its pinions
vóre auri. with the brightness of
gold.
15 Dum Omnípotens illic While the Almighty was
dispergébat reges, * ni- scattering the kings there
ves cecidérunt in Sal- snow fell on Salmon!"
mon!"

God chooses Sion as his abode:

- 16 Montes excélsi sunt Lofty mountains are the
montes Basan, * clivósi mountains of Basan, high
montes sunt montes Ba- ridged mountains are the
san: mountains of Basan:
17 Cur invidiósi aspícitis, Why look ye enviously,
montes clivósi, montem high-ridged mountains, at
in quo habitáre plácuít the mountain in which it
Deo, * immo in quo ha- has pleased God to dwell
bitábit Dóminus sem- yea, on which God will
per? dwell forever?
18 Currus Dei myriádes The chariots of God are
sunt, mille et mille: * myriads, thousand upon
Dóminus de Sínai in thousand: from Sinai the
sanctuárium venit. Lord comes into the sanctu-
ary.

160 Ascendísti in altum, Thou hast gone up on

duxisti captivos, accepisti in donum homines, * vel eos qui nolunt habitare apud Dominum Deum.— high, thou hast led the captives, thou hast received men as a gift, even those that are unwilling to dwell with the Lord God. *Psalm* **67**

God is an ever-present Saviour:

0 Benedictus Dominus Blessed be the Lord, day per singulos dies: * portat onera nostra Deus, salus nostra! after day: God, our salvation, bears our burdens!

1 Deus noster est Deus qui salvat, * et Dominus Deus dat evasione a morte. Our God is the God who saves, and the Lord God gives deliverance from death.

12 Profecto, Deus confringit capita inimicorum suorum, * verticem capillatum ejus qui ambulat in delictis suis. Verily, God crushes the heads of his foes, the hairy crown of him who walks in his sins.

13 Dixit Dominus: "Ex Basan reducam, * reducam e profundo maris, The Lord said: "I will bring back from Basan, I will bring back from the bottom of the sea,

14 Ut intingas pedem tuum in sanguine, * ut linguis canum tuorum sit portio ex inimicis." That thou mayest dip thy foot in blood, that the tongues of thy dogs may have their share of the foes."

A procession of thanksgiving to the temple:

25 Vident ingressum tuum, Deus, * ingressum Dei mei, regis mei, in sanctum: They see thy going in, O God, the going in of my God, of my king, to the sanctuary:

26 Præcedunt cantores, postræmi sunt citharædi, * in medio puellæ tympana sonant. The singers go before, the players on instruments follow after, among them damsels play on timbrels.

27 In cœtibus festivis be- "Bless God in festive gath- **161**

- Psalm* 67 *nedicite Deo, * Dómino vos, ex Israëli nati."* *Ibi est Bënjamin, mínimus natu, præcédens eos, príncipes Juda cum turmis suis, * príncipes Zábulon, príncipes Néphthali.—*
- erings, bless the Lord, ye that are born of Israel." There is Benjamin, the youngest, going before them, the princes of Juda with their followers, the princes of Zabulon, the princes of Nephtali.

The future conversion of all nations:

- 29 *Exsere, Deus, poténtiam tuam, * poténtiam, Deus, qui operáris pro nobis!* Put forth thy might, O God, thy might. O God, who dost work for us!
- 30 *Propter templum tuum, quod est in Jerúsalem, * tibi offerant reges múnera!* Because of thy temple which is in Jerusalem, let the kings offer gifts unto thee!
- 31 *Increpa feram arúndinis, * turmam taurórum cum vítilis populórum,* Rebuke the wild beast of the reed, the drove of bulls with the calves of the peoples,
- Prostérnant se cum láminis argénti: * díssipantes quæ bellis lætántur.* Let them bow down with pieces of silver: scatter the nations that delight in wars.
- 32 *Véniant magnátes ex Ægýpto, * Æthiopia exténdat manus suas ad Deum.—* Let the great ones come from Egypt, let Ethiopia stretch out her hands to God.

All nations are summoned to praise God:

- 33 *Regna terræ, cantáte Deo, psállite Dómino, * qui véhitur per cælos, cælos antíquos!* O kingdoms of the earth, sing ye unto God, make melody to the Lord, who is borne through the heavens, the heavens of old!

*Ecce, edit vocem suam, vocem poténtem: * "Agnóscite poténtiam Dei!"* Lo, he sends forth his voice, his mighty voice: "Acknowledge the might of God!"

Super Israël majestas His majesty is over Israel, *Psalm*
ejus, * et potentia ejus and his might is in the
in núbibus. clouds. 67

Timendus est Deus e God is to be feared from
sancto suo, Deus Israël; his holy place, the God of
inse potentiam dat et ro Israel; he gives might and
bur pópulo suo. * Bene strength to his people.
dictus Deus! Blessed be God!

Commentary

This psalm (Davidic according to the title) is a victory hymn. It seems to be written to be sung as the Ark of God was being carried in triumphal procession to the Temple. The psalmist calls upon God to arise (cf. Num. 10, 35, where the words are part of the ritual of taking up the Ark that it might lead the army of Israel) and to disperse his foes so that righteous men may rejoice.

5-7: The people are then invited to join the hymn of triumph to the God who from his sanctuary protects the helpless and punishes the rebels.

8-11: Next the hymn recalls the miracles that God worked when he marched before his people in the Exodus (though some would make the wonders here described refer to the help of God given in a recent battle; the rain referred to would in that case be an actual rain, not the fall of manna and quail).

12-15: Then the spread of the news of the victory is described, how the kings with their armies were put to flight, and how the womenfolk at home are prepared to share the spoils of the victorious. The psalmist pauses in verse 14 to rebuke those who preferred pastoral ease to victorious warfare (such seems to be the sense of verse 14, where reference is made to those who stayed within their possessions watching the beauty of the doves). When victory came the enemy were scattered as snow on Mount Salmon (so some commentators; this translation interprets the references to snow as being to an actual storm).

16-24: The psalmist then addresses the mountains of Bashan where the battle was fought, and asks why they despised the hill of Sion since it is the dwelling of the God who has myriads of chariots at his disposal. He turns then to describe (the Ark of) God triumphantly ascending to Sion with his captives (verse 19; Ephesians 4, 8 ff. applies this text to Christ's triumphant Ascension), and blesses God for saving Israel and destroying the enemy and bringing them as captives to the rejoicing Israelites.

25-28: Then he calls upon the nations to witness the triumphant procession of the Lord to his sanctuary, describing the musicians and princes.

Psalm 29-36: Then, probably as the Ark is deposited in the sanctuary, he prays that God will make perpetual the present safety of Israel, by keeping the nations in subjection. He calls upon all the nations to celebrate the power and rule of God who is now enthroned in his Sanctuary protecting his people.

68

Reflection

As God fed the Israelites daily with manna in the desert, so does he invite us to come to the altar rail every morning to be nourished by his own Body and Blood.

PSALM 68

The Plaint of Christ

For One in Great Suffering

A prayer of the suffering Saviour during his passion. It describes vividly the greatness of Christ's passion and the malice of his persecutors, whose punishments are foretold.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the melody of "The Lilies." A psalm of David.

A plea for help in extreme distress:

- 2 **S**alvum me fac, Deus, **S**ave me, O God, for the
* quóniam venérunt **S**waters have come up to
aquæ usque ad collum. my neck.
3 Immérsus sum in limo I am plunged into the
profúndi, * et non est, mire of the deep, and there
ubi pedem figam; is nowhere to set my foot.
Veni in altum aquá- I am come into deep
rum, * et fluctus óbru- waters, and the waves over
unt me. overwhelm me.
4 Deféssus sum clamán- I am wearied with crying.
do, * raucæ factæ sunt my throat has become
fauces meæ; hoarse;
Defecérunt óculi mei, My eyes have failed, while
* dum expécto Deum I await my God.
meum.
5 Plures sunt quam ca- More than the hairs of
pilli cápitis mei, * qui my head, are they that hate
164 odérunt me sine causa, me without cause.

Validiores quam ossa mea, qui iniuste adversantur mihi: * num, quæ non rapui, illa redam?— Stronger than my bones, are they that withstand me unjustly: shall I give back what I have not taken away? *Psalms* **68**

It is for God's sake that he is persecuted:

Deus, tu scis insipientiam meam, * et delicta mea te non latent. O God, thou knowest my folly, and my faults are not hidden from thee.

Ne confundantur propter me, qui sperant in te, * Domine, Domine exercituum. Let not those that hope in thee be put to shame because of me, O Lord, the Lord of hosts.

Ne erubescant propter me, * qui quaerunt te, Deus Israël. Let not those that seek thee blush because of me, O God of Israel.

Etenim propter te sustinui opprobrium, * operuit confusio faciem meam. Because for thy sake I have borne reproach, shame has covered my face.

Extraneus factus sum fratribus meis, * et alienus filiis matris meæ. I am become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's sons.

Nam zelus domus tuæ comedit me, * et opprobria exprobrantium tibi ceciderunt super me. For the zeal of thy house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

Affixi jejúnio animam meam, * et versum est in opprobrium mihi. I afflicted my soul with fasting and it was turned to my reproach.

Saccum indui pro vestiménto, * et ludibrio factus sum illis. I put on sackcloth for clothing, and I became a laughing-stock to them.

Fabulantur contra me qui sedent in porta, * et conviciantur mihi, qui bibunt vinum. They that sit in the gate make up stories against me, and the wine-bibbers taunt me.

Psalm

A prayer for help from his foes:

68

Mea autem oratio ad te, Dómine, * témpore grátiae, Deus; But unto thee, O Lord, is my prayer, in the time of mercy, O God;

Secúndum magnam bonitátem tuam exáudi me, * secúndum auxilium tuum fidéle. Hear me, O God, in thy great goodness, according to thy faithful help.

15 Eripe me de luto, ne submérgetur, libera me ab iis qui me odérunt, * et de profúndis aquárum. Rescue me from the mire lest I sink, deliver me from them that hate me and from the depths of the waters.

16 Ne óbruant me fluctus aquárum, neve absórbeat me profúndum, * neve occlúdat super me púteus os suum. Let not the floods overwhelm me, let not the deep swallow me up, let not the pit shut its mouth upon me!

17 Exáudi me, Dómine, quia benigna est grátia tua; * secúndum multitudínem misericórdiae tuae réspice in me, Hear me, O Lord, for thy mercy is kind; look upon me according to the bounteousness of thy pity,

18 Neque absconderis faciém tuam a servo tuo; * quóniam tribulor, cito exáudi me. And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble, hear me speedily.

19 Appropínqua ad ánimam meam, rédime eam; * propter inimícos meos libera me. Come near to my soul ransom it; save me because of my enemies.

20 Tu scis oppróbrium meum et confusiómem ametitignomíniam meam; * in conspéctu tuo sunt omnes qui tribulant me. Thou knowest my reproach and my confusion and my shame: in thy sight are all they that afflict me.

21 Oppróbrium fregit cor meum et deféci, et expectávi commiserántem, Reproach has broken my heart, and I have become faint, and I waited for

sed non fuit, * et consolantes, sed non invēni. someone to pity me, but there was no one, and for some to comfort me, but I found none. *Psalm* **68**

Et indidērunt in escam meam fel, * et in siti mea potavērunt me aceto.— And for food they gave me gall, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

An imprecation upon his persecutors:

Fiat mensa eōrum laqueus ipsis, * et amīcis tendīcula. May their table be a snare for them, and a trap for their friends.

Obscurētur oculi eōrum, ne videant, * et dumbi eōrum fac semper vacillent. Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and make their loins continually to shake.

Effūnde super eos indignationem tuam, * et æstus iræ tuæ comprehendat eos. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let the heat of thine anger overtake them.

Habitatio eōrum devastetur, * et in tabernaculis eōrum ne sit qui habitet. Let their dwelling be laid waste, and let there be none to dwell in their tents.

Quoniam quem tu percussisti, persecuti sunt, * et dolorem ejus quem vulnerasti, adauxerunt. For they persecute him whom thou didst smite, and they deepened the grief of him whom thou didst wound.

Adde culpam ad culpam eōrum, * et apud te ne declarentur justi. Add thou sin unto their sin, and let them not be declared just before thee.

Deleantur de libro viventium, * et cum justis ne scribantur. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living; and with the just let them not be inscribed.

Praise for his deliverance:

Ego autem sum miser et dolens; * auxilium tuum, Deus, tueatur me. But I am wretched and sorrowful; let thy help, O God, guard me.

- Psalm* Laudábo nomen Dei I will praise the name
 cum cántico, * et præ- God with song, and I will
 68 dicábo eum cum gratiá- glorify him with thank-
 rum actióne. giving;
 32 Et placébit Deo magis And it will please God
 quam taurus, * quam more than a bull, more
 júvencus cornútus et than a bullock with horns
 ungulátus. and hoofs.
 33 Vidéte, húmiles, et læ- See, ye lowly ones, and rejoice,
 támini, * et revivíscat joyce, and let your hearts
 cor vestrum, qui quæri- live again, ye that seek
 tis Deum. God.
 34 Quia páuperes audit For God hears the poor
 Dóminus, * et vinctos and despises not his prisoners.
 suos non contémnit.
 35 Laudent eum cæli et Let the heavens and the
 terra, * mária et quid- earth praise him, the sea
 quid movétur in eis. and whatever moves therein.
 36 Nam Deus salvábit Si- For God will save Sion and
 on, et ædificábit civitátes build up the cities of Judah;
 Juda: * et habitábunt and they shall dwell there
 ibi et possidébunt eam. in and shall possess it.
 37 Et semen servórum ejus And the seed of his servants
 hereditábit eam; * et shall inherit it: and
 qui diligunt nomen ejus, they that love his name
 morabúntur in ea. shall abide therein.

Commentary

This psalm is Davidic according to its title and Romans 11. It is accepted as messianic since our Lord quotes it of himself (5b, in John 15, 25) and Paul (Romans 15, 3, quoting 10) and Romans 11, 9-10, quoting 23-24) applies it to the Jews' rejection of Christ; and Matthew (27, 34, 48) and John (19, 29-30) apply the reference to vinegar in verse 22 to the drink given to Lord on the Cross; while Peter (Acts 1, 20) applies verse 23 to the fate of Jesus' betrayer, Judas. The psalmist describes himself as almost overwhelmed by a bitter and unjustified persecution.

6-13: God knows whether he is guilty, but he asks to be spared, lest the good be scandalized at his fate; for he is suffering at the hands of his own because of his fidelity and love for his Father's house. Humble and patient he meets only with derision.

14-22: God must save him for the persecution has broken (so the Hebrew in verse 21) his heart, and he has no consoler; rather men give him vinegar and gall to drink. Psalm 69

23-29: He prays that God in his indignation will destroy his wicked persecutors, since they have no right to share the fate of the just.

30-37: When he is saved by God he will sing his praises along with all the poor and persecuted, who will rejoice at this proof that God will save the just and reestablish Sion for his faithful worshipers. (31-37 are commonly believed to be a later liturgical addition.)

Reflection

John, the beloved apostle, deserted our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane, but in penance and sorrow he returned to Jesus during the crucifixion. And the Blessed Mother was his reward.

PSALM 69

A Model Prayer

For God's Help during Prayer

A cry for help against enemies. David prays for the confusion of those who would take his life, while beseeching God at the same time to bless those just ones who seek his divine way.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Davidis. Ad For the choir-master. Of David.
commemorandum. For a remembrance.

A prayer against enemies:

- 2 **P**laceat tibi, Deus, ut **B**e pleased, O God, to res-
erípias me; * Dómi- cue me; O Lord, make
ne, ad adjuvándum me haste to help me!
festína.

- 3 Confundántur, et eru- May they be confounded
bescant, * qui quærunt and ashamed, that seek my
vitam meam. life!

- Cedant retrórsum, et May they fall back and be
pudóre afficiántur, * qui covered with shame that
delectántur malis meis. delight in my misfortunes.

- 4 Recédant confusióne May they fall back, cover-
opérti, * qui dicunt mi- ed with confusion, that say
hi: Euge, euge! to me: 'Tis well, 'tis well!

A prayer for the just:

- 5 Exsúltent et læténtur May all that seek thee re- 169

Psalm de te * omnes qui quæ- joice and be glad in thee.
runt te;

70

Et dicant semper: "Ma- And let them that desire
gnificetur Deus," qui de- thy help say always: "God
siderant auxilium tuum. be glorified."

6 Ego autem miser sum But I am wretched and
et pauper, * Deus, suc- poor, O God, help me!
curre mihi!

Adjutor meus et liberá- Thou art my helper and
tor meus es tu: * Dómi- my deliverer: O Lord, do
ne, ne tardáveris. not tarry.

Commentary

This psalm is but a repetition of psalm 39, 14-18. Here "Elohim" ("God") is generally found instead of "Yahweh" ("Lord").

Reflection

The first verse of this psalm is recited in the Breviary at the beginning of each of the canonical Hours, so that the temptations of the devil, more determined during the time of prayer, may be overcome.

PSALM 70

Persevering Prayer

For Perseverance in Old Age

Prayer of a venerable old man for help in time of persecution. God has been his refuge from youth, and he will always, even now in his old age, put his trust in God.

Confident prayer in danger:

1 **A**d te, Dómine, confú- **U**nto thee, O God, do I flee
gio: * ne confúndar for refuge: let me never
in ætérnum; be confounded:

2 Secúndum justítiam tu- According to thy justice
am éripe me et líbera rescue me and deliver me,
me; * inclína ad me au- incline thine ear unto me
rem tuam et salva me. and save me:

3 Esto mihi petra refúgii, Be unto me a rock of ref-
arx muníta, ut salves uge, a walled city, that
me: * nam petra mea et thou mayest save me, for

arx mea es tu.

thou art my rock and my *Psalms*
stronghold.

70

Reasons for the appeal:

Deus meus, éripe me de manu iníqui, * de pugno improbi et oppressóris: My God, rescue me from the hand of the wicked, from the fist of the wrongdoer and the violent:

Nam tu es exspectatio mea, Deus meus, * Dómine, spes mea a juventute mea. For thou, O my God, art my trust, O Lord, my hope from my youth.

Tibi innixus sum ab útero; a ventre matris meæ eras protéctor meus: * in te sperávi semper. On thee I have rested from my birth; from my mother's womb thou wast my protector, in thee I have hoped always.

Tamquam prodígium appáruí multis; * tu enim fuísti adjutor meus fortis. I have appeared unto many as a wonder; for thou hast been my mighty refuge.

Plenum erat os meum laude tua, * toto die glória tua.— All day long my mouth was full of thy glory.

Repeated prayers for help:

Ne abjéceris me tempore senectútis; * cum defécerint vires meæ, ne dereliqueris me. Cast me not off in the time of old age; when my strength shall fail, do not thou forsake me.

Nam loquúntur de me inimíci mei, * et observántes me, consiliántur una, For my foes talk about me, and they that watch me, take counsel together,

Dicéntes: "Deus derelíquit eum; perseguímini et comprehéndite eum,* quia non est qui erípiat." Saying: "God has abandoned him; pursue him and seize him for there is none to rescue."

Deus, noli stare procul a me, * Deus meus, ad juvándum me festína. O God, be not far from me; my God, make haste to help me.

Psalm Confundántur, deficiant adversántes vitæ Let them that seek my life
 70 meæ: * operiántur confusione et pudóre qui be confounded and come to
 quærunt mala mihi. nothing; let those that seek
 my hurt be covered with
 shame and reproach.

A promise of thanksgiving:

14 Ego autem semper sperábo, * et in dies cónferam ad omnem laudem tuam. But I will always hope,
 and every day I will add to
 all thy praise.

15 Os meum annuntiábit justítiam tuam, toto die auxília tua: * neque enim novi mensúram eórum. My mouth shall show
 forth thy justice, and thy
 helps all the day long: for I
 know not the number of
 them.

16 Enarrábo poténtiam Dei,* Dómine, prædicábo justítiam tuam solius.— I will tell of the might of
 God, O Lord, I will proclaim
 thy justice, thine alone.

Past mercies are a guarantee for the future:

17 Deus, docuisti me a juventúte mea, * et usque nunc annúntio mirabilia tua. Thou hast taught me, O
 God, from my youth, and
 up to now I have proclaimed
 thy wonders.

18 Et in senécta quoque et sénio, * Deus, ne dereliqueris me, And in old age also and
 grey hair, O Lord, forsake
 me not.

Dum annuntiábo brá- Until I shall show forth
 chium tuum generatióni thy arm to this generation
 huic,* ómnibus ventúris thy might to all the gen-
 poténtiam tuam, erations to come.

19 Et justítiam tuam, Deus, quæ contíngit cælos, * qua fecisti tam magna: Deus, quis par est tibi? And thy justice, O God
 which touches the heav-
 ens, by which thou has
 done such great things: O
 God, who is like to thee?

20 Imposuisti mihi tribulatiónes multas et malas: * rursus vivum fá- Thou who hast laid many
 and grievous trials upon
 me: thou wilt quicken me
 again and wilt lift me up

terrarē rursus me extólles. again from the depths of *Psalm*
the earth.

Auge dignitátem me- Increase my honor, and **70**
am, * et dēnuo me con- comfort me again.
soláre.

Praise and thanksgiving:

Ego quoque celebrábo And to the sound of the
psaltério fidelitátem tu- harp, I will praise thy
am, Deus, * psallam tibi faithfulness, O God, I will
cithara, Sanctus Isra- make melody to thee with
él. the lyre, O Holy One of
Israel.

Exsultábunt lábia mea, My lips shall rejoice when
cum cantábo tibi, * et I sing to thee, and my soul,
ánima mea, quam red- which thou hast redeemed.
emísti.

Etiam lingua mea toto And all day long my ton-
die eloquétur justitiam gue shall proclaim thy jus-
tuam, * quia confúsi tice, because they that seek
sunt et erubuérunt qui my misfortune are con-
quærunt malum mihi. founded and covered with
shame.

Commentary

This psalm (Davidic according to the Greek and Vulgate, anonymous in the Hebrew) represents the psalmist as an old man asking God for aid while confidently recalling how wondrously God has aided him from childhood. So he praises God all the day long.

9-16: He prays to be shielded now from his adversaries for he hopes in God and desires to praise his justice ever more and more. He could not exhaust this subject if he were to speak of it all his life.

17-24: He has learned of God's power from his youth; he must not be forsaken in his old age, because he wants to tell of God's wondrous justice to future ages. He who has brought the psalmist safely through so many afflictions will lift him up and console him now. Then he will joyfully praise God's fidelity in redeeming him from his persecutors—as he has in the past, all the day long.

Reflection

May we at the end of our lives be conscious of work well done, and say as did the elderly Simeon: "Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, **173**

Psalm. O Lord, according to thy word, in peace; because my eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2, 29-30).

71

PSALM 71

The Kingdom of Peace

For the Spread of Christ's Kingdom

A description of the Messiah, the King of Peace, and of his eternal and universal reign. Righteousness of rule is the keynote of the psalm.

The title of the psalm:

1 Salomonis.

Of Solomon.

Deus, iudicium tuum regi da,* et iustitiam tuam filio regis:

O God, give to the king thy judgment, and thy justice to the king's son:

A prayer for the Messiah; blessings of his reign:

2 Gubernet populum tuum cum iustitia,* et humiles tuos cum æquitate. May he rule thy people with justice, and thy poor with fairness.

3 Afferent montes pacem populo* et colles iustitiam. May the mountains bring peace to the people, and the hills justice.

4 Tuébitur humiles populi, salvos faciet filios pauperum,* et conteret oppressorem.— He shall guard the lowly ones of the people, he shall save the children of the poor, and he shall crush the oppressor.

5 Et diu vivet ut sol,* et sicut luna in omnes generationes. And he shall live long, like the sun, and like the moon, throughout all generations.

6 Descéndet ut pluvia super gramen,* sicut imbres qui irrigant terram. He shall come down like rains upon the greensward and as showers that water the earth.

7 Florébit in diébus ejus iustitia* et abundantia pacis, donec deficiat luna. In his days justice shall flourish, and abundance of peace, until the moon shall fail.

His universal rule:

Psalm

71

Et dominábitur a mari And he shall rule from sea
usque ad mare, * et a to sea, and from the river
flúmine usque ad térmi- unto the ends of the earth.
nos terræ.

Coram illo prócident ini- His enemies shall fall be-
mici ejus, * et adversárii fore him, and his foes shall
ejus púlverem lingent. lick the dust.

Reges Tharsis et insu- The kings of Tharsis and
larum múnera ófferent; of the islands shall offer
* reges Arabum et Saba presents; the kings of the
dona addúcent: Arabians and of Saba shall
bring gifts.

Et adorábunt eum om- And all the kings shall
nes reges, * omnes gen- adore him, all nations shall
tes sérvient ei.— serve him.

Etenim liberábit páu- For he shall deliver the
perem invocántem, * et poor man who cries to him,
miserum, cui non est and the unfortunate one
adjútor. who has no helper.

Miserébitur ínopis et He shall have pity on the
páuperis, * et vitam páu- needy and the poor: and he
perum salvábit: shall save the life of the
poor.

Ab injúria et oppres- He shall deliver them from
sione liberábit eos, * et harm and violence, and
pretiósus erit sanguis their blood shall be pre-
eorum coram illo.— cious in his sight.

The splendor of his kingdom:

Ideo vivet, et dabunt ei Therefore he shall live,
de auro Arábiæ, * et and they shall give him of
orábunt pro eo semper: the gold of Arabia, they
perpétuo benedícant ei. shall pray for him always:
they shall bless him per-
petually.

Erit abundántia fru- There shall be abundance
ménti in terra; in sum- of grain in the land; its
mis móntium strepet, ut fruit shall rustle on the
Líbanus, fructus ejus, * mountain tops, like Liba-

Psalm et florébunt incolæ úr- nus, and the dwellers in the
bium ut grámina terræ. cities shall flourish like the
71 grass of the fields.

- 17 Erit nomen ejus bene- His name shall be blessed
dictum in sácula; * dum forever; so long as the sun
lucébit sol, permanébit shall shine, his name shall
nomen ejus. endure.

Et benedicéntur in ipso And all the tribes of the
omnes tribus terræ, * earth shall be blessed in
omnes gentes beátum him, all nations shall pro-
prædicábunt eum.— claim him blessed.

A doxology:

- 18 Benedíctus Dóminus, Blessed be the Lord, God
Deus Israë!l, * qui facit of Israel, who alone does
mirabília solus. wonderful things.

- 19 Et benedíctum nomen And blessed be his glorious
ejus gloriósum in sácu- name forever; and may all
la; * et repleátur glória the earth be filled with
ejus omnis terra. Fíat, his glory! So be it, so be
fiat. it!

Commentary

This psalm (ascribed in the title to Solomon) is messianic. Addressing the ideal king the psalmist prays that he may be gifted with justice and judgment in order to rule God's people perfectly. He asks that peace and justice descend upon his reign with the king as champion of the oppressed. The reign of the king will endure as long as the sun and moon last and be as beneficent as dew upon the meadow, full of justice and peace.

8-14: The king's dominion shall be universal, embracing even the most distant nations. In the midst of such splendor he shall not forget the poor and weak.

15-17: So shall he reign in prosperity and men shall constantly worship and bless him. His land shall be blessed with abundant fertility and population. His name shall be blessed forever and everywhere.

18-19: These verses seem to be a doxology added here to mark the end of the second Book of the Psalms.

Reflection

The Catholic Church will never cease to exist, for Christ, our King, has said: "Behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28, 20).

PSALM 72

The Riddle Solved

For Those Who Envy the Rich

Psalm

72

The psalmist solves the difficulty of the prosperity of the godless. Their happiness is shortlived. In the future life they shall perish, whereas the just will enjoy God forever.

Temptations because of the prosperity of the wicked:

1 Psalmus. Asaphi.

A psalm of Asaph.

Quam bonus rectis est
Deus, * Dóminus eis
qui puro sant corde!

How good is God to the
upright, the Lord, to
them that are pure of
heart!

2 Mei autem fere nutá-
runt pedes, * pæne lapsi
unt gressus mei,

But my feet almost wav-
ered, my steps almost slip-
ped,

3 Quia impiis invidébam,
* prosperitátem pecca-
torum obsérans.—

For I was envious of the
ungodly, seeing the pros-
perity of sinners.

4 Nulla enim sunt iis tor-
ménta, * sanum et pin-
gue est corpus eórum.

For they have no tor-
ments, healthy and fat is
their body.

5 In ærúnnis mortálium
non versántur, * et cum
homínibus non flagel-
lántur.

In the hardships of mor-
tals they have no part, and
they are not scourged like
other men.

6 Ideo cingit eos, ut tor-
quis, supérbia, * et vio-
lencia, ut vestis, óperit
eos.

Therefore pride encircles
them like a necklace, and
violence covers them like a
robe.

7 Prodit ex crasso corde
iniquitas eórum, * erúm-
punt figménta mentis.

Their iniquity comes forth
from a gross heart, the
thoughts of their mind
break forth.

8 Irrident et loquúntur
maligne, * oppressiónem
ex alto minántur.

They jeer and they speak
spitefully, they threaten
proudly.

9 Aggrediúntur cælum
ore suo, * et lingua eó-

They set their mouth
against heaven, and their

Psalm rum perstringit terram. tongue ranges over the earth.

72

Ideo pópulus meus se Therefore my people turns
convértit ad eos, * et to them, and they gulp
aquas abundántes sor- down great draughts of
bent sibi. water.

11 Et dicunt: "Quómodo And they say: "How does
scit Deus, * et estne co- God know and is there
gnítio in Altíssimo?" knowledge in the Most
High?"

12 Ecce tales sunt pec- Behold, the wicked are
catóres * et, semper like that, and, always un-
tranquílli, poténtiam troubled, they increase
augent.— their power.

Vain joy of the wicked, who do not have God's friendship:

13 Ergóne frustra mun- Have I, then, in vain kept
dum servávi cor meum, my heart clean, and wash-
* et lavi in innocentia ed my hands in innocence
manus meas?

14 Nam flagélla pátiar om- For I suffer scourges all
ni tēpore, * et castiga- the time, and chastisement
tiónem quotidie. every day.

15 Si cogitárem: Loquar If I were to think: I will
ut illi, * genus filiórum talk like them, I should
tuórum deseruíssem. abandon the generation of
thy children.

16 Meditábar ergo, ut co- Therefore I took thought
gnóscerem hoc; * sed la- that I might know this
boriósum visum est mihi, thing: but it seemed hard
to me.

17 Donec intrávi in sancta Until I went into the
Dei, * et atténdi fini il- sanctuary of God, and con-
lórum. sidered their end.

18 Vere, in via lúbrica cól- Truly thou dost set them
locas eos, * præcípitas on a slippery way; thou
eos in ruínas. castest them down in ruins.

178 Quómodo corruérunt How they fell in a mo-
mómento, * desiérunt, ment, they have ceased to

absúpti sunt magno
terrore!

be, they are utterly con-
sumed by a great terror!

20 Sicut sómnum, cum
quis evígilat, Dómine, *
ita, cum surréxeris, sper-
nes figméntum eórum.

Like a dream, when one
awakes, O Lord, so, when
thou risest up, thou shalt
despise their image.

21 Quando exasperabátur
mens mea, * et cor me-
um pungebátur,

When my mind was being
provoked, and my heart
was being stricken,

22 Ego insípiens eram ne-
que intelligébam: * ut
júmentum fui coram te.

I was foolish and without
understanding: I was like
a brute beast before thee.

23 Ego autem semper te-
cum ero: * apprehendi-
sti manum dexteram
meam;

But I will be with thee al-
ways: thou hast taken my
right hand;

24 Consílio tuo dedúces
me, * et in glóriam tan-
dem suscípies me.

By thy counsel thou wilt
lead me, and at length thou
wilt receive me into glory.

25 Quis præter te mihi est
in cælo? * et, si tecum
sum, non deléctat me
terra.

Whom have I in heaven
but thee? and earth does
not delight me if I am with
thee.

26 Déficit caro mea et cor
meum, * Petra cordis
mei et pars mea Deus in
æternum.

My flesh and my heart
melt away, the Rock of my
heart and my portion, God
forever.

27 Ecce enim, qui recédunt
a te, peribunt, * perdis
omnes qui fornicántur
abs te.

For, behold, they that go
away from thee, shall per-
ish, thou destroyest all that
are unfaithful to thee.

23 Mihi autem bonum est
prope Deum esse, * pó-
nere in Dómino Deo re-
fúgium meum.

But it is good for me to be
near God, to put my refuge
in the Lord God.

Enarrábo ómnia ópera
tua * in portis fíliæ Si-
on.

I will declare all thy works
in the gates of the daughter
of Sion.

salm

Commentary

73

This psalm (of Asaph, according to the title) treats of the same question as psalms 36 and 48: why wicked men prosper and good men suffer. The psalmist praises God's goodness to Israel. Then he asserts that he nearly fell into sin, when he saw the secure prosperity of sinners. They seemed to be spared the miseries of other men, though they boldly wear their sins as ornaments. For in appearance they are sleek and insolent with lust; and their evil thoughts are revealed in proud and blasphemous words. Even the good are tempted to follow them, doubting God's providence, seeing the secure and easy life of sinners.

13-17: The psalmist himself almost sinned by concluding from his own suffering that it is vain to lead a blameless life. Then he realized that such a way of acting would be a betrayal of God's people. Seeking another solution for his difficulty, he was unsuccessful until he betook himself to God's sanctuary, there to reflect on the fate of the godless.

18-22: They and their prosperity perish as quickly as the dream of a man who awakes from sleep. Then he realizes that in his impatience he was like a brute beast.

23-28: For he is always sure that he is with God. God holds his hand guiding him and finally receiving him into his glory. So nothing in the world counts but God. Whatever his weakness, God is his possession forever. But the godless will surely perish. The psalmist, then, will find his happiness in holding fast to God and proclaiming his wonders.

Reflection

Those who enjoy the Divine friendship are happy beyond all words. They are not affected by poverty, sorrow, fear or trouble. They know that if God is with them, nothing else matters.

PSALM 73

Desecration

An Act of Reparation

Lamentation over the profaning of the Temple. How long will God tolerate this terrible situation? The psalmist prays for the salvation of his people, and the punishment of their foes.

Complaint to God for having abandoned his people:

¹ Asaphi.

A maskil of Asaph.

180 **Q**uare, Deus, reppulisti **O** God, why hast thou
in perpétuum, * ex- cast us off forever?

ardescit ira tua contra oves pascuæ tuæ? Why is thy wrath enkindled against the sheep of thy pasture? *Psalm* **73**

Recordáre sodalitátis tuæ, quam condidisti ab antiquo, tribus, quam redemisti tibi in possessionem, * montis Sion, in quo sedem posuisti. Oh, remember thy congregation which thou didst establish in days of old, the tribe which thou didst buy back into thy possession, Mount Sion, wherein thou didst make thy dwelling.

Díriges gressus tuos ad ruínas perpétuas: * ómnia vastávit inimicus in sanctuário. Turn thy steps toward these perpetual ruins: the foe has ravaged everything in the sanctuary;

The desecration of the Temple:

Rugierunt adversárii tui in loco convéntus tui, * posuerunt signa sua in tropæum. Thy enemies have belowered in the place of thy assembly, they have set up their emblems as trophies.

Similes erant illis qui in condénso vibrant secúrim, * „et jam áscia et malleo jánuas ejus páriter contúndunt. They are like those who swing the axe in a thicket, and now with hatchet and hammer they have broken its gates to pieces.

Igni tradiderunt sanctuarium tuum, * profanarunt in terra tabernaculum nóminis tui. They have set thy sanctuary ablaze, they have profaned the dwelling of thy name on the earth.

Dixerunt in corde suo: “Destruámus eos simul; * combúrite ómnia sanctuaria Dei in terra.” They said in their heart: “Let us destroy them all together; burn ye all God’s sanctuaries in the land.”

Signa nostra non jam videmus, non est propheta; * neque inter nos est qui sciat quousque. We no longer see our signs, there is no prophet; and no one amongst us who knows how long.

Quousque, Deus, exprobrábit inimicus? * blasphemábit adversári- How long, O God, shall the foe reproach? Shall the enemy blaspheme thy

Psalm us nomen tuum in per- name forever?
pétuum?

73 Quare avértis manum Why dost thou draw back
tuam * et dexteram thy hand, and keep thy
tuam rélines in sinu right hand in thy bosom?
tuo?—

God's past favors towards Israel:

- 12 Deus autem rex meus But God is my king of old.
est ab antiquo, * qui éf- who works salvation in the
ficít salútem in médio midst of the earth.
terræ.
- 13 Tu dirupísti poténtia Thou didst divide the sea
tua mare, * contrivísti by thy might, thou didst
cápita draconum in break in pieces the heads of
aquis. the dragons in the waters.
- 14 Tu confregísti cápita Thou didst crush the
Leviáthan, * dedísti eum heads of the Leviathan.
escam monstribus marí- thou didst give him as food
nis. to the monsters of the deep.
- 15 Tu elicuísti fontes et Thou didst cause to break
torréntes: * tu siccásti forth fountains and tor-
flúvios copiósos. rents: thou didst dry up
rivers that were full.
- 16 Tuus est dies et tua est Thine is the day, thine is
nox; * tu stabilísti lu- the night; thou didst make
nam et solem. firm the moon and the sun.
- 17 Tu statuísti omnes tér- Thou didst fix all the
minos terræ; * æstátem boundaries of the earth.
et hiémem tu formásti. thou didst form the sum-
mer and the winter.

A prayer for help:

- 18 Recordáre hæc: inimí- Remember these things:
cus exprobrávit tibi, Dó- the foe has mocked thee, O
mine, * et pópulus insí- Lord, and a foolish people
piens maledíxit nómini has blasphemed thy name
tuo.
- 19 Ne tradíderis vúlturi Deliver not to the vulture
vitam túrturis tui: * vi- the life of thy turtle-dove:
tam páuperum tuórum forget not forever the life

noli oblivisci in perpé- of thy poor!
tuum.

20 Réspice in fœdus tuum, Give heed to thy covenant,
* quia violentiæ plena for the dark places of the
sunt latibula terræ, et land and of the field are
campi. full of violence.

21 Ne hūmilis revertatur Let not the lowly one go
confusus: * pauper et back confounded! let the
inops laudent nomen afflicted and the poor bless
tuum. thy name!

22 Exsúrge, Deus, age cau- Arise, O God, take thy
sam tuam; * recordáre cause in hand; remember
impropérii quæd insípi- how the foolish man re-
ens quotidie infert tibi. proaches thee daily.

23 Noli oblivisci voces ad- Forget not the outcries of
versariórum tuórum: * thine enemies: the roar of
tumúltus insurgéntium them that rise against thee
contra te ascéndit sem- ascends continually.
per.

Commentary

The psalmist (called Asaph in the title) complains that God has rejected his flock in anger, and calls upon him to remember how he redeemed them of old as his own possession. He asks God to consider the destruction wrought on Sion and in his sanctuary by the enemy, and their triumphant banners set up there. This enemy plans to root out all worship of the true God. (The Hebrew in verse 8: "Let us destroy them altogether. Burn all the sanctuaries of God in the land!" The reference is probably to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.) Still God sends no prophet to console or uphold his people; nor does he make a move to aid them.

12-23: Of old he miraculously crushed the Egyptian oppressor and led his people through the Red Sea and the Jordan. So he asks God to remember the godlessness of the present enemy and asks him not to abandon to such beasts his afflicted people. God must remember his covenant with his people who are now downtrodden. He must arise and vindicate his own cause against the pride and hate of his enemies.

Reflection

Let us profess our faith in the loving providence of God, who continually watches over us, by frequently and devoutly making the sign of the Cross!

Psalm

74

PSALM 74

The Just Judge

Confidence in the Victory of the Just

God is the Judge of the world. He avenges all sin. The psalm includes an admonition to presumptuous sinners to take warning lest God pour out the vials of his wrath on them.

The title of the psalm:

- ¹ Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the
"Ne destruxeris." Psalmus. melody of "Destroy not." A
Asaphi. Canticum. psalm and song of Asaph.

Thanks for a recent victory:

- ² Celebrámus te, Dómine, celebrámus, * et We praise thee, O Lord,
ne, celebrámus, * et we praise, we proclaim
prædicámus nomen tu thy name, we recount thy
um, enarrámus mirabí wonders.
lia tua.—

God's judgment against the wicked:

- ³ "Quando statúero tem- "When I fix the time, I will
pus, * ego secúndum jus judge with justice.
judicábo.
⁴ Etsi moveátur terra Although the earth with
cum ómnibus incolis su- all that dwell therein be
is: * ego firmávi colúm- shaken: I hold firm its pil-
nas ejus. lars.

A warning to Israel's enemies:

- ⁵ Dico insoléntibus: 'No- I say to the insolent: 'Be
líte insoléscere,' * et im- not insolent,' and to the
piis: 'Nolíte extóllere wicked: 'Lift not up the
cornu.' horn.'
⁶ Nolíte extóllere contra Lift not your horn against
Altíssimum cornu ve- the Most High, speak not
strum, * nolíte loqui insolence against God.
contra Deum protérva.
⁷ Neque enim ab Oriénte For neither from the East
neque ab Occidénte * ne- nor from the West, nor
que a desérto neque a from the wilderness nor
móntibus: from the mountains:

184 Sed Deus est iudex: * But God is the judge: this

hunc déprimit, et illum man he puts down and that *Psalm*
extóllit. man he lifts up:

Nam in manu Dómini For in God's hand is a **75**
calix est, * qui spumat chalice, wherein foams a
vino, plenus mixto: wine full of spices:

Et propínat ex eo; us- And he pours from it; they
que ad fæces sorbeant, shall drink to the dregs, all
¹ bibent omnes impii the wicked on earth shall
terræ."— drink."

A promise of praise to God:

Ego autem exultábo But I will exult forever, I
in ætérnum, * psallam will sing to the God of
Deo Jacob. Jacob.

Et ómnia córnua impi- And I will break all the
órum confringam; * ex- horns of the wicked; and
tolléntur cornua justi. the horns of the just shall
be lifted up.

Commentary

This psalm (the title indicates it belongs to an Asaphic collection) praises God for wondrous manifestations of his power.

3-9: He will exercise his justice in might in his own good time. He warns the impious that nothing can ever help them to escape God's justice which exalts the humble but which gives the chalice of his wrath to sinners to drink to the dregs.

10-11: So the psalmist sings God's praises and resolves to crush evil and exalt the just.

Reflection

There is no place, says St. Augustine, where we may flee from an angry God except to a propitiated God. Flee to him!

PSALM 75

A Great Triumph

Thanksgiving for Victory over Temptation

Thanksgiving for victory over enemies. The psalmist celebrates the triumph of God, who is terrible in his judgment of them that resist him.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Fidibus. For the choir-master. On
Psalmus. Asaphi. Canticum. stringed instruments. A psalm
and song of Asaph.

Psalm God glorified his Name in destroying Jerusalem's enemies:

- 75** **I**nnótuit Deus in Juda, **G**od is known in Juda, his
 * in Israël magnum name is great in Israel
 est nomen ejus.
- 3 In Salem est tabernáculum ejus, * et habitatio ejus in Sion. His tabernacle is in Salem, and his abode in Sion.
- 4 Ibi confrégit fúlmina arcus, * scutum et gládium et arma.— There he has broken the bolts from the bow, the shield, the sword, and the weapons.
- 5 Splendens luce tu, potens, venísti * a móntibus ætérnis. Thou hast come, shining with light, powerful, from the everlasting hills.
- 6 Spoliáti sunt robústi corde, dórmunt somnum suum, * et ómnium fórtium defecérunt manus. The stout of heart have been despoiled, they sleep, their sleep, and the hands of all the mighty have failed.
- 7 Increpatione tua, Deus Jacob, * torpuérunt currus et equi. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, chariots and steeds were halted.

God's irresistible judgment:

- 8 Terríbilis es tu, et quis resístet tibi, * ob vehementiam iræ tuæ? Thou art terrible, and who shall resist thee, because of the vehemence of thy wrath?
- 9 De cælo audíri fecísti júdicium: * terra expávit et siluit, From heaven thou hast made judgment heard, the earth trembled and was silent,
- 10 Cum exsúrgeret ad júdicium Deus, * ut salvos fáceret omnes húmiles terræ.— When God arose in judgment to save all the lowly of the earth.

Praise to God:

- 186 Nam furor Edom glori- For the fury of Edom shall
 ficábit te, * et supérsti- glorify thee, and the sun

tes Emath festum agent vivors of Emath shall make *Psalm*
tibi. festival unto thee.

Fácite vota et sólvite Make ye vows and pay **76**
ea Dómino Deo vestro, * them to the Lord your God,
omnes in circúitu ejus let all who are round about
munus ferant Terribili, him bring a gift to the ter-
rible One,

Ei qui cóhibet spíritum To him who restrains the
principum, * qui terrí- spirit of princes, who is
bilis est régibus terræ. terrible to the kings of the
earth.

Commentary

This psalm (with an Asaphic title) is frequently interpreted as a commemoration of the destruction of the Assyrian army besieging Jerusalem under Sennacherib (cf. 4 Kings 19, 33-35; Is. 37, 33-36.) God's name is great in Juda and his dwelling is proved to be on Sion, for he destroyed and paralyzed the enemy.

8-13: So is God's wrath ever terrible when he arises to pronounce judgment for the meek, and the residue of his wrathful destruction shall praise him (this seems to be the sense of the Hebrew in verse 11). Israel, then, shall pay her vows to this God so terrible in his destruction of her powerful enemies.

Reflection

Many a sinner has been humbled at the display of God's might. Such is the history of St. Paul, who was turned from fierceness and wrath to be not only a follower of Christ, but one of his greatest apostles.

PSALM 76

Meditation

For Those Complaining of their Sufferings.

The sad state of the chosen people raises a doubt in the psalmist's mind concerning God's promises, but the thought of Israel's glorious past gives him hope for the future.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. After the
Idithun. Asaphi. Psalmus. manner of Idithun. A psalm of
Asaph.

Psalm *A prayer, lest God's mercy has come to an end.*

76 **V**ox mea ad Deum **M**y voice rises to God and
ascéndit et clamo, I cry, my voice rises to
vox mea ad Deum, ut God that he may hear me,
áudiat me; * „die an- in the day of my distress I
gústiaæ meæ Dóminum seek the Lord.
quæro.

Manus mea per no- In the night my hand
ctem exténditur inde- is outstretched without
fessa; * consolatióem wearying; my soul refuse
rénuít ánima mea. comfort.

4 Cum Dei recórdor, in- When I remember God, I
gemísco; * cum recógito, groan; when I reflect, my
déficit spíritus meus. spirit fails.

5 Tenes vígiles óculos Thou keepest my eyes
meos; * contúrbor nec awake; I am troubled and
possum loqui. cannot speak.

6 Perpéndo dies antíquos, I consider the days of old
* et prístinos annos and I recall the years of
7 recórdor: yore:

Méditor nocte in corde I meditate in the night
meo, * recógito et scru- within my heart, I reflect
tátur spíritus meus: and my spirit makes a dili-
gent search:

8 “Num in ætérnum re- “Will the Lord cast off
péllet Deus, * nec propí- forever, and will he never
tius erit ultra? more be favorable?

9 Num in perpétuum de- Will his kindness be want-
fíciat grátia ejus, * írrita ing forever, will his promise
erit promissio in omnes be vain unto all genera-
generatióes? tions?

10 Num oblítus est mise- Has God forgotten to be
réri Deus? * an irátus merciful? Has he in his
occlúsit misericórdiam anger shut up his mercy?
suam?”—

11 Et dico: “Hic est dolor And I say: “This is my sor-
meus, * quod mutáta est row, that the right hand of
délixtera Altíssimi.” the Most High is changed.”

188 Memor sum factórum I am mindful of the works

Dómini, * útique memor
sum antiquórum mira-
bílum tuórum.

Et méditor ómnia ópe-
ra tua, * et gesta tua
perpéndo.

Sentiments of confidence because of God's past goodness.

Deus, sancta est via
tua: * quis deus est ma-
gnus ut Deus noster?

Tu es Deus, qui mira-
bília patrac, * notam fe-
cisti in pópulis potén-
tiam tuam.

Redemisti brácchio tuo
pópulum tuum, * filios
Jacob et Joseph.

Vidérunt te aquæ, De-
us, vidérunt te aquæ:
tremuérunt, * atque
commóti sunt fluctus.

Profuderunt núbila
aquas, nubes emisérunt
vocem, * atque sagittæ
tuæ volárunť.

Tónitrus tuus in túr-
bine sónuit, collustrá-
runt fúlgura orbem: *
commóta est et trémuit
terra.

Per mare facta est via
tua, et sémita tua per
aquas multas, * neque ap-
paruerunt vestigia tua.

Duxisti ut gregem pó-
pulum tuum, * per ma-
num Moýsis et Aaron.

of the Lord, surely I re- *Psalm*
member thy wonders of **76**
yore.

And I meditate on all thy
works, and I reflect on thy
deeds.

O God, thy way is holy:
what god is great like our
God?

Thou art the God that
dost wonders, thou hast
made thy might known
among the peoples.

With thine arm thou hast
redeemed thy people, the
sons of Jacob and of Joseph.

The waters saw thee, O
God, the waters saw thee:
they trembled, and the
depths were troubled.

The clouds poured out
water, the skies thundered
forth, and thine arrows
flew around.

Thy thunder sounded in
the whirlwind, lightnings
illuminated the world: the
earth shook and trembled.

Through the sea was made
thy way, and thy path over
many waters, and thy foot-
prints did not appear.

Thou didst lead thy people
like a flock of sheep, by the
hand of Moses and Aaron.

Commentary

This psalm (Asaphic according to the title) is a complaint to
God in inconsolable grief. The psalmist is constant in his

Psalm
77

mourning, recalling how God formerly looked after his people and wondering if he has now cut off his tender care for them and forgotten to be merciful in his anger. The psalmist then says: "This is indeed a misery for me, that the right hand (the powerful protection) of the Most High has changed." To strengthen himself against such a thought he meditates on the marvelous manifestations of God's protection of his people in the past.

14-21: He then addresses God with a prayer in which he recalls the wondrous proofs of his faithful protection of his people, especially in the Exodus when by miraculous means he led Israel as a shepherd leading his flock.

Reflection

Our faith in God must be as unshaken as that which prompted the father of the boy possessed by the devil to exclaim: "I do believe; help my unbelief" (Mc. 9, 23).

PSALM 77

Ingratitude

Learning from the Past

Lessons of warning from Israel's history. In the past she has repeatedly experienced God's goodness and mercy. Yet Israel soon forgot his benefits, and rebelled against God, and severe chastisement was the result.

An invitation to listen to the psalmist's teaching:

¹ Asaphi.

A maskil of Asaph.

Ausculta, pópule meus,
doctrinam meam; *
inclináte aures vestras
ad verba oris mei.

Hearken, O my people, to
my teaching; incline
your ears to the words of
my mouth.

² Apériam ad parábas
os meum, * próferam
arcána ætátis antíquæ.

I will open my mouth unto
parables, I will reveal hid-
den sayings of old.

³ Quæ audívimus et co-
gnóvimus, * et quæ pa-
tres nostri narravérunt
nobis,

What we have heard and
have known, and what our
fathers told us,

⁴ Non occultábimus a fi-
liis eórum, * generatióni
futúræ narrábimus

We will not hide from
their sons, we will tell to
the coming generation,

Laudes Dómini et po-
téntiam ejus * et mira-
bília quæ fecit.

The praises of the Lord
and his might and the
wonders he has done.

Státuit enim præcép- For he set up a precept in *Psalm*
tum in Jacob * et legem Jacob and established a
cóndidit in Israël, law in Israel, **77**

Ut, quæ mandávit pá- So that the things he com-
tribus nostris, * nota manded to our fathers,
iácerent filiis suis, they should make known to
their sons,

Ut cognóscat generátio So that the coming gen-
ventúra, filii qui nascén- eration might know, so
tur, * ut surgant et nar- that the children who are
rent filiis suis, born shall arise and tell
their children,

Ut ponant in Deo spem So that they shall put
suam neque obliviscán- their hope in God and shall
tur ópera Dei, * sed man- not forget the works of
dátá ejus obsérvent; God, but shall keep his
commandments;

Neve fiant, sicut patres Lest they become, like
eórum, * generátio re- their fathers, a rebellious
béllis et cóntumax: and stiff-necked genera-
tion:

Generátio quæ cor non A generation that had not
hábuít rectum, * neque a right heart, nor a spirit
ánimum Deo fidélem. faithful to God.

*Israel's disobedience in spite of God's mercies at the
Exodus and in the desert:*

Fílii Ephraim pugnán- The sons of Ephraim that
tes arcu * terga verté- fought with the bow turned
runt die próelii. back in the day of battle.

Non servavérunt fœdus They kept not the cove-
Dei, * et in lege ejus nant of God, and in his law
renuérunt ambuláre, they refused to walk,

Et oblíti sunt ópera And they forgot his works
ejus, * et mirabília ejus and his wonders that he
quæ osténdit eis. showed them.

Coram pátribus eórum In the sight of their
fecit mirácula * in terra fathers he did wonders in
Ægýpti, in campo Tá- the land of Egypt, in the
neos. field of Zoan.

Psalms Scidit mare et traduxit eos, * et stáruit aquas ut ággerem. He divided the sea and led them across, and he made the waters to stand like a wall.

77

14 Et duxit eos nube per diem, * per totam noctem lumine ignis. And he led them with a cloud during the day, and with a blaze of fire all through the night.

15 Scidit petras in deserto, * et adaquávit eos, ut flúctibus, copiose. He cleft the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them to drink plenteously a from floods.

16 Et elícuit rivos de petra, * et dedúxit, ut flúmina, aquas. And he brought forth springs out of the rock, and made waters run down like rivers.

Even with the miracles, the people still sinned:

17 Sed perrexérunt peccáre in eum, * offéndere Altíssimum in deserto. But they continued to sin against him, to offend the Most High in the wilderness.

18 Et tentavérunt Deum in córdibus suis, * peténtes cibum secúndum cupiditátem suam. And they tempted God in their hearts, asking food for their lust.

19 Et locúti sunt contra Deum; * dixérunt: "Num póterit Deus paráre mensam in deserto? And they spoke against God; they said: "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?"

20 Ecce percússit petram, et fluxérunt aquæ et torrentes emanavérunt: * num panem quoque póterit dare, vel paráre carnem populo suo?" Lo, he struck the rock, and waters flowed, and torrents streamed forth: can he also give bread, or provide flesh for his people?"

21 Ideo, cum audísset Dóminus, furóre exársit, et ignis accénsus est con- Therefore, when the Lord heard, he was inflamed with anger, and a fire was

tra Jacob, * et ira effér-
buit contra Israël,

kindled against Jacob, and
wrath boiled up against
Israel, *Psalm* **77**

Quia non credidérunt
in Deum, * nec speravé-
runt in auxílio ejus.

Because they believed not
in God, nor trusted in his
help.

Sed mandávit núbibus
desuper, * et jánuas cæli
aperuit,

But he commanded the
clouds from above, and he
opened the doors of heaven,

Et pluit super eos man-
na ad manducándum, *
et panem cæli dedit eis.

And he rained down
manna upon them to eat,
and he gave them the bread
of heaven.

Panem fórtium man-
ducávit homo: * cibária
misit eis ad saturitátem.

Man ate the bread of the
strong: he sent them food
to the full.

Excitávit Eurum de
cælo * et addúxit potén-
tia sua Austrum.

He caused an East wind to
blow from heaven and by
his power he brought up
the South wind.

Et pluit super eos, ut
púlverem, carnes, * et,
sicut arenam maris, vo-
latília pennáta.

And he rained flesh upon
them like dust, and feath-
ered fowls like the sand of
the sea.

Et cecidérunt in castra
eórum, * circa taberná-
cula eórum.

And they fell into their
camp, around their tents.

Et manducavérunt, et
saturáti sunt valde, * et
desidérium eórum im-
plévit eis.

And they ate, and were
well filled, and he satisfied
their craving.

Nondum cessáverant a
desidério suo, et escæ
eórum erant in ore ipsó-
rum, * cum ira Dei
efférbuit contra eos,

They had not yet ceased
from their desire, and their
food was in their mouth,
when the wrath of God
boiled up against them,

Et eadē fecit próce-
rum eórum, * et júvenes
Israël prostrávit.

And he slew their chief
men, and struck down the
youth of Israel.

Repeated crimes: yet God pitied Israel.

Psalm
77

- Sed tamen peccavérunt But for all that they sin-
ultra, * nec credidérunt ned still, and believed not
miráculis ejus. his wonders.
- 33 Et consúmpsit velóci- And he consumed their
ter dies eórum, * et an- days swiftly and their years
nos eórum exítio repen- by a sudden ending.
tíno.
- 34 Cum occidébat eos, When he was slaying
quærébant eum, * et con- them, they sought him.
vérsi requirébant Deum; and having turned about
they sought after God;
- 35 Et recordabántur De- And they remembered
um esse petram suam, * that God was their rock,
et Deum Altíssimum red- and the most high God
emptórem suum. their redeemer.
- 36 Sed decipiébant eum But they deceived him
ore suo, * et lingua sua with their mouth, and lied
mentiebántur ei. to him with their tongue.
- 37 Et cor eórum non erat And their heart was not
rectum cum eo, * nec right with him, nor were
fidéles erant in fœdere they faithful in his cove-
ejus. nant.
- 38 Ipse tamen míserans Yet he, feeling pity, for
dimittébat culpam nec gave the sin and did not de-
perdébat eos, et crebro stroy them, and many a
cohíbuít iram suam, * time he kept back his anger
neque effúdit totum fu- and did not pour out all his
rórém suum. wrath.
- 39 Et recordátus est eos And he remembered that
esse carnem, * hálitum, they were flesh, a breath,
qui vadat nec revertá- that goes forth and returns
tur. not.

Israel's sins; God's miracles of the Exodus:

- 40 Quóties provocavérunt How often did they pro-
eum in desérto, * afflixé- voke him in the desert, how
runt eum in solitúdi- often did they grieve him
ne! in the wilderness!

194 Et iterum tentavérunt And again they tempted

Deum, * et Sanctum Is-
raël exacerbavérunt.

God, and grieved the Holy *Psalm*
One of Israel.

2 Non sunt recordáti
manus ejus, * diéi quo
redémít eos de manu ad-
versárii,

They did not remember
his hand, nor the day that
he redeemed them from the
power of the enemy,

8 Quando patrávit in
Ægypto signa sua, * et
prodígia sua in campo
Táneos,

When he wrought his
signs in Egypt, and his
wonders in the field of
Zoan,

4 Et convértit in sángu-
inem flúmina eórum * et
rivos eórum, ne bíberent.

And when he changed
their rivers into blood, and
their brooks, that they
might not drink.

5 Misit in eos muscas
quæ comedérunt eos, *
et ranas quæ infestárun-
t eos;

When he sent upon them
flies which ate them up,
and frogs which molested
them;

6 Et dedit bruchos pro-
véntus eórum, * et fru-
ctum labóris eórum lo-
cústæ.

And when he gave their
harvest to the cankerworm
and the fruit of their labor
to the locust.

7 Percússit grándine ví-
neas eórum, * et sycó-
moros eórum pruína.

He smote their vines with
hail, and their sycamore
trees with frost.

8 Et trádídít grándini
júménta eórum, * et gre-
ges eórum fulmínibus.

And he gave up their cat-
tle to the hail, and their
flocks to the lightnings.

9 Misit in eos æstum iræ
suæ, indignatióem et
furórem et tribulatió-
nem: * catérvam mini-
strórum calamitátis.

He sent against them the
heat of his anger, indigna-
tion and wrath and trou-
ble: a troop of agents of
disaster.

10 Viam apéruít iræ suæ:
non servávit eos a mor-
te, * et animália eórum
trádídít pesti.

He opened a way for his
anger: he did not keep
them from death, and he
gave up their beasts to the
pestilence.

11 Et percússit omne pri-

And he struck every first- 195

- Psalm* mogénitum in Ægýpto, born in Egypt, their first
 * primos partus eorum offspring in the tents of
 77 in tabernáculis Cham.
- 52 Et edúxit sicut oves And he brought forth his
 pópulum suum, * et de people like sheep, and led
 dúxit eos ut gregem in them like a flock in the
 desérto. desert.
- 53 Et duxit eos secúros And he led them on se
 nec timuérunt, * et ini curely and they did not
 micos eorum opéruit fear, and the sea over
 mare. whelmed their enemies.
- 54 Et perdúxit eos in ter- And he guided them into
 ram sanctam suam, * ad his holy land, to the moun
 montes quos acquisívit tains which his right hand
 dextera ejus; had acquired;
- 55 Et ejécit ante eos gen- And he cast out the heath
 tes, et sorte attribuit eas en before them, and by lot
 in hereditátem, * et ha he gave them as an inheri
 bitáre fecit in taberná tance, and he made the
 culis eárum tribus Isra- tribes of Israel to dwell in
 òel. their tents.

The unfaithfulness of Israel in Canaan:

- 56 Sed tentavérunt et pro- But they tempted and pro
 vocavérunt Deum Altis- voked the most high God,
 simum, * et præcépta and they did not keep his
 ejus non servavérunt. commandments.
- 57 Et defecérunt et præ- And they fell away and
 varicáti sunt sicut patres dealt treacherously like
 eorum, * aberravérunt their fathers, and they
 ut arcus fallax. wandered from the way
 like a crooked bow.
- 58 Ad iram laccessivérunt They provoked him to
 eum excélsis suis, * et anger with their high
 sculptílibus suis æmula places and they roused him
 tiónem ejus excitavé- to jealousy with their
 runt. graven images.
- 59 Audívit Deus et exársit God heard and was in
 furóre, * et ácritér rejé- flamed with wrath, and he
 cit Israël. severely rejected Israel.

Et reliquit habitaculum Silo, * tabernaculum ubi habitavit inter homines. And he left the tabernacle of Silo, the tabernacle where he dwelt among men. *Psalm* **77**

Et tradidit in captivitatem robur suum, * et gloriam suam in manus inimici. And he delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the hands of the foe.

Et tradidit gladio populum suum, * et contra hereditatem suam exarsit. And he delivered his people to the sword, and was wroth against his inheritance.

Juvenes eorum comedit ignis, * et virgines eorum non sunt desponsatae. Fire consumed their young men, and their maidens were not betrothed.

Sacerdotes eorum gladio ceciderunt, * et viduae eorum non ploraverunt.— Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows mourned not.

The pity of God:

Et expergefactus est velut e somno Dominus, * velut bellator victus a vino. And the Lord was roused up as one out of sleep, as a warrior that had been overcome by wine.

Et percussit a tergo inimicos suos: * ignominiam æternam inflixit eis. And he struck his foes from behind; he inflicted everlasting shame upon them.

Rejecting Ephraim and Silo, God chose Juda and Sion:

Et rejecit tabernaculum Joseph, * et tribum Ephraim non elegit. And he rejected the tent of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim.

Sed elegit tribum Juda, * montem Sion quem dilexit. But he chose the tribe of Juda, mount Sion, which he loved.

Et exstruxit, ut cælum, sanctuarium suum, * ut terram, quam fundavit in sæcula. And he built up his sanctuary like heaven, like the earth which he founded forever.

- Psalm* Et elégit David, ser- And he chose David, his
78 vum suum,* et tulit eum servant, and took him from
 de caulis óvium: the sheepfolds:
 71 Sequéntem lactántes He called him who was fol-
 vocávit eum, ut pásceret lowing the sucklings, that
 Jacob, pópulum suum, he might feed Jacob, his
 * et Israë!, hereditátem people, and Israel, his in-
 suam. heritance.
 72 Et pavit eos cum pro- And he fed them with in-
 bitáte cordis sui, * et tegrity of heart, and led
 prudéntia mánuum suá- them with prudent hands.
 rum duxit eos.

Commentary

This psalm (Asaphic) carries on the theme of the preceding. The psalmist recalls for future generations the care that God has had over Israel, so that Israel may never lose its trust in him as her ancestors did.

9-16: He recalls the infidelities of Israel even in the midst of the mercies of the Exodus.

17-31: They murmured in the desert; God sent manna and quail; yet, because they rebelled, God had to punish them.

32-39: When they were temporarily repentant, God mercifully forgave.

40-55: They quickly forgot the wonders that God wrought in Egypt and the Exodus.

56-64: Even after their wondrous conquest of Palestine they violated their covenant with God, by their idolatry forcing him to leave his sanctuary at Shiloh, and to give them over to their enemies.

65-72: Still God was merciful; he again destroyed their enemies, and established his wondrous sanctuary on Sion; and he gave them a royal line, founded on David, a good king.

Reflection

God has shown his goodness and mercy to us as he did to the Israelites. We too forgetting our purpose of amendment have often fallen into more and even greater sins.

PSALM 78

Lamentation

Preparation for Confession

infidelity. Let the Lord be merciful towards those in bondage.

Psalm
78

Grief over the fate of Jerusalem and the Temple:

Psalms. Asaph.

A psalm of Asaph.

Deus, venérunt gentes in hereditátem tuam, polluérunt templum sanctum tuum,* redegérunt Jerúsalem in ruínas.

O God, the heathen have invaded thine inheritance, they have defiled thy holy temple, they have reduced Jerusalem to ruins.

Dedérunt córpora servórum tuórum escam volatílibus cæli,* carnes sanctórum tuórum béstiis terræ.

They have given the dead bodies of thy servants as food to the birds of the air, the flesh of thy saints to the beasts of the earth.

Effudérunt sánguinem eórum ut aquam in circúitu Jerúsalem,* neque erat qui sepelíret.

They have poured out their blood like water round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them.

Facti sumus oppróbrium vicínis nostris,* irrisio et ludíbrium his qui sunt in circúitu nostro.—

We are become a reproach to our neighbors, a laughing-stock and a mockery to them that are round about us.

Prayers that God will forgive his people and punish their foes:

Quóusque,Dómine? irascéris perpétuo?* ardébit velut ignis zelus tuus?

How long, O Lord? Wilt thou be angry forever? Shall thy jealousy burn like a fire?

Effúnde iram tuam super gentes quæ te non agnóscunt,* et super regna quæ non invocant nomen tuum.

Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the kingdoms that invoke not thy name.

Etenim comedérunt Jacob,* et habitatióinem ejus vastavérunt.

For they have devoured Jacob, and have laid waste his dwelling.

Noli recordári contra

Weigh not against us the

Psalm

78

nos culpas majórum; ci- sins of our fathers; let thy
to obvéniat nobis mi- mercy speedily come to
sericórdia tua: * nam meet us: for we are very
miseri sumus valde.— miserable.

9 Adjuva nos, Deus salú- Help us, O God of our sal-
tis nostræ, propter gló- vation, for the glory of thy
riam nóminis tui, * et name, and deliver us and
libera nos et dimitte pec- forgive our sins for thy
cáta nostra propter no- name's sake.
men tuum.

10 Quare dicant gentes: * Why should the heathen
“Ubi est Deus eórum?” say: “Where is their God?”
Innotéscat inter gen- Let the avenging of thy
tes, coram óculis nostris, servant's blood, which has
* últio sánguinis servó- been shed, be made known
rum tuórum, qui effúsus among the heathen before
est.— our eyes.

11 Pervéniat ad te gémi- Let the groaning of the
tus captivórum; * secún- captives come unto thee;
dum poténtiam bráccii according to the might of
tui solve addictos morti. thine arm set free those
who are doomed to death.

12 Et retribue vicinis no- And pay back to our
stris sépties in sinum neighbors sevenfold into
eórum * oppróbrium quo their bosom the reproach
affecérunt te, Dómine. which they have cast upon
thee, O Lord.

13 Nos autem, pópulus tu- But we, thy people and the
us et oves páscuæ tuæ, sheep of thy pasture, will
celebrábitus te in ætér- glorify thee forever; we will
num; * a generatióne in proclaim thy praise from
generatióne enarrábi- generation unto genera-
mus laudem tuam. tion.

Commentary

This Asaphic psalm is very similar to psalm 73. The pagans have devastated God's city and his temple and slaughtered God's people and made of them a mockery.

5-8: The psalmist asks God to punish these pagans, mercifully forgetting the sins of Israel.

9-13: It belongs to God to save and forgive Israel, else the

pagans will scoff at Israel's God. He asks God to avenge his pitiable people. Then his flock will praise God forever. *Psalm*

Reflection

79

In the sorrows, tragedies and disasters of life reflect on the words of St. Paul to the Romans concerning God's designs: "Now we know that for those who love God all things work together unto good" (8, 28).

PSALM 79

God's Vineyard

For a Sincere Desire of Conversion

Lamentation over Israel, once God's fruitful vineyard, now laid waste. The psalmist prays hopefully for the restoration of its former glory.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the
Lilium." Asaphi. Psalmus. melody of "The Lily of the Law."
A psalm of Asaph.

A prayer to the Shepherd of Israel:

- 2 **Q**ui pascis Israël, au- **G**ive ear, O shepherd of
sculta, * qui ducis, Israel, thou who leadest
velut gregem, Joseph. Joseph like a flock.
Qui sedes super Chérubim, affülge * coram Thou who sittest above
the Cherubim, shine forth
Ephraim et Bénjamin et before Ephraim, and Ben-
Manasse. jamin, and Manasses.
Excita poténtiam tuam, Arouse thy strength and
* et veni, ut salvos fácias come to save us.
nos.

- 4 Deus, restitue nos, * et O God, restore us and
serénium præbe vultum cause thy face to shine,
tuum, ut salvi simus.— that we may be saved.

A plaintive description:

- .. Deus exercituum, quo- O God of hosts, how long
usque succensébis, * cum wilt thou be enraged, with
oret pópulus tuus? thy people that prays?
6 Cibásti eum pane lacri- Thou hast fed them with
márum * et potásti eum the bread of tears and thou

Psalm lācrimis copiōse.

79

Fecisti nos causam iurgii vicinis nostris, * et inimici nostri illūdunt nobis.

8 Deus exercituum, restitue nos, * et serenum præbe vultum tuum, ut salvi simus.

hast given them tears to drink in great measure.

Thou hast made us a cause of strife unto our neighbors, and our foes make fun of us.

O God of hosts, restore us, and cause thy face to shine, that we may be saved.

Israel was once God's flourishing vine:

9 Vitem ex Ægypto abstulisti, * expulisti gentes, et plantasti eam.

10 Præparasti ei solum, * et radices egit et implēvit terram.

11 Operti sunt montes umbra ejus, * et ramis ejus cedri Dei.

12 Extēdit palmites suos usque ad mare, * et usque ad flumen propāgines suas.—

Thou didst bring forth a vine out of Egypt, thou didst drive out heathen, and didst plant it.

Thou madest ground ready for it, and it struck root and filled the land.

The mountains were covered with its shade, and the cedars of God with its branches.

It stretched forth its sprouts to the sea, and its shoots even to the river.

Plea for God's protection:

13 Quare destruxisti mœciam ejus, * ut vindēmient eam omnes qui transeunt per viam,

14 Devāstet eam aper silvestris, * et bestiæ agri depascāntur eam?

15 Deus exercituum, revertere, * respice de cælo et vide, et visita vitem hanc.

Why hast thou broken down the hedge thereof, so that all who pass by the way do pluck it,

So that the boar of the forest lays it waste, and the beasts of the field devour it?

O God of hosts, return, look down from heaven and see, and visit this vine.

Et protége eam, quam And protect that which *Psalm*
plantávit dextera tua, * thy right hand has planted, **79**
et súrculum, quem robo- and the young shoot which
rásti tibi.— thou hast made strong for
thyself.

Repeated prayers for the restoration of God's favor:

Qui eam combussérunt Let them that have burn-
igni et concidérunt eam, ed it with fire and cut it
* péreant comminatóne down, perish at the threat
vultus tui. of thy face.

Sit manus tua super Let thy hand be upon the
virum dexterae tuae, * su- man of thy right hand, up-
per filium hóminis, quem on the son of man, whom
roborasti tibi. thou hast made strong for
thyself.

Jam non recedémus a Then we will never leave
te ultra; * vivos servábis thee; thou wilt keep us liv-
nos, et prædicábitur ing, and we will proclaim
nomen tuum. thy name.

Dómine, Deus exercí- O Lord, God of hosts, re-
tuum, restítue nos, * et store us, and cause thy face
serénium præbe vultum to shine, that we may be
tuum, ut salvi simus. saved.

Commentary

This (Asaphic) psalm is in the same spirit as the preceding, with a refrain recurring in verses 4, 8, and 20. The psalmist appeals to the shepherd of Israel to arise from his throne (the Ark) and restore Israel.

5-8: Then he asks how long God will be angry with Israel.

9-12: He pictures Israel a vineyard transplanted by God from Egypt to flourish in Palestine.

13-16: The vineyard is now deserted by God and ravaged. He therefore asks God to care for his vineyard again.

17-20: If God will only destroy the enemies of his vineyard and strengthen Israel, the psalmist promises that the nation will no more be unfaithful.

Reflection

Christ, the Good Shepherd, goes before his flock, guiding them in the way of truth to heaven, his fold. He watches lest the weary halt and be separated from their companions. He is truly our Companion and Leader through life.

Psalm

PSALM 80

80

A Festal Song

For the Disobedient

A hymn for the feast of Tabernacles. The people are warned that it is in their power to choose between life and death according to their obedience or disobedience.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Secundum
"Torcularia . . ." Asaphi. For the choir-master. To the melody of "The Winepresses." A psalm of Asaph.

An invitation to celebrate the feast:

- 2 **E**xultáte Deo adjutóri nostro, * acclamáte Deo Jacob. **R**ejoice unto God our helper, shout with joy to the God of Jacob.
- 3 Sonáte psaltério, et pulsáte týmpanum, * cítharam dulce sonántem cum lyra. Strike up the psaltery, and play the timbrel, the sweet-sounding harp with the lyre.
- 4 Clángite in neoméniabúcina, * in plenilúniob, die solémni nostro, Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at full moon, on our festal day.
- 5 Quia institútum Israëlest, * præcéptum Dei Jacob. For it is a statute of Israel, a law of the God of Jacob.
- 6 Legem státuit hanc in Joseph, * cum prodíret contra terram ~~Eg~~Égypti.— He made this law in Joseph, when he went forth against the land of Egypt

God's blessings at the Exodus and in the desert:

Linguam quam non nóveram, audívi; 7 "Libérávi ab ónere húmerum ejus; * manus ejus a cóphino cessáruunt. I heard a tongue which I knew not: "I have freed his shoulder from the burden; his hands have let go of the basket.

- 8 In tribulatióne clamásti, et eripui te; ex nube tonánti respóndi tibi, * probávi te apud aquam Meríba. Thou didst cry in distress, and I rescued thee; from the thunder-cloud I answered thee, I tested thee at the waters of Meriba.

Audi, pópule meus, et
monébo te: * Israë'l, úti-
nam áudias me!

Hear, O my people, and I *Psalms*
will warn thee: Oh, that
thou mayest hear me, **80**
Israel!

Non erit apud te deus
aliénus, * neque adorá-
bis deum peregrínnum:

No strange god shall be
among thee, nor shalt
thou worship an outside
god:

Ego sum Dóminus, De-
us tuus, qui edúxi te de
terra Ægýpti: * diláta
os tuum, et implébo il-
lud.—

I am the Lord, thy God,
that brought thee out of
the land of Egypt: open thy
mouth wide, and I will fill
it.

Israel's disobedience and God's mercy:

Sed non audívit pópulo
meus vocem meam, *
et Israë'l non obtempe-
rávit mihi.

But my people heard not
my voice, and Israel did not
obey me.

Ideo trádidi eos durí-
tiæ cordis eórum: * ám-
bulent secúndum consí-
lia sua.

Therefore I abandoned
them to the hardness of
their heart: let them walk
according to their own de-
signs.

Utinam pópulus meus
audíret me, * Israë'l am-
buláret in viis meis:

Would that my people
heard me, would that Israel
walked in my ways:

Conféstim deprímerem
inimícos eórum, * et con-
tra adversários eórum
véterem manum meam;

I would at once overwhelm
their foes, and I would turn
my hand against their
enemies;

Qui odérunt Dóminum,
blandiréntur ei, * et sors
eórum manéret in per-
pétuum.

Those who hate the Lord
would flatter him, and
their lot would last forever.

Illum autem cibárem
de medúlla trítici, * et
melle de petra saturá-
rem eum."

But him I would feed on
the marrow of the wheat,
and I would fill him with
honey out of the rock."

Psalm

Commentary

81

This psalm (Asaphic) was clearly composed for the harvest feast (of the Tabernacles). The psalmist invites the people to rejoice in this feast, established by God in the Exodus.

6c-11: He recalls the covenant of mutual fidelity made by God with his people when he saved them from Egyptian bondage.

12-17: But since Israel is repeatedly unfaithful, God on his feast has at times to withhold his protective blessings.

Reflection

In verse 11 of this psalm God says: "Open wide thy mouth, that I may fill it." How?—we may ask. With the Holy Eucharist, for, in the words of St. Augustine, a soul which is capable of containing God, nothing less than God will fill.

PSALM 81

Against Unjust Rulers

Prayer for God's Justice

God's judgment against unjust judges and rulers. The Lord has found them partial, unfair, and oppressive. They have used their power to crush the helpless and innocent, and to help the powerful and wicked.

A vision of God as Judge of his earthly representatives:

1 Psalmus. Asaphi.

A psalm of Asaph.

Deus assúrgit in concílio divíno, * in médio deórum iudícium agit.—

God rises in the divine assembly, in the midst of the gods he gives judgment.

God upbraids the unjust judges:

2 "Quóusque iudicábitis iníque, * et causæ impiórum favébitis?

"How long will you judge unjustly, and favor the wicked?

3 Deféndite opprèssum et pupíllum, * ius réddite húmili et páuperi.

Defend the oppressed and the fatherless, do justice to the lowly and the poor.

4 Liberáte opprèssum et egénium: * de manu impiórum erípíte eum.—

Deliver the oppressed and the needy: rescue them from the power of wicked men."

206 Non sápiunt neque in- They neither know nor do

télligunt, in ténebris they understand, they *Psalm*
 ámbulant: * commovén- walk in darkness: all the
 tur ómnia fundaménta foundations of the earth **82**
 terræ. are shaken.

Ego dixi: "Dii estis, * I have said: "You are gods,
 et filii Altíssimi omnes. and all sons of the Most
 High.

Verúmtamen sicut hó- Yet you shall die like men,
 mines moriémini, * et you shall fall like any one
 sicut quivis ex princípí- of the princes."
 bus cadétis."—

An appeal to God to assume his office as ruler of all mankind:

Surge, Deus, júdica ter- Arise, O God, judge thou
 ram, * quóniam tu jure the earth, for thou dost
 pössides omnes gentes. rightfully possess all the
 nations.

Commentary

The psalmist (Asaph) here pictures God as Judge, condemn-
 ing earthly judges who do not protect the weak.

5-7: God reminds such men that, though their office is di-
 vine, they themselves are mortal.

8: The psalm ends with a prayer for the establishment of
 God's dominion over the earth.

Reflection

Those who aspire to office involving authority
 over others should do so because it will give
 them a greater opportunity for doing good.
 They should bear in mind that their new field of
 labor would give them the opportunity to serve God
 and their fellow-men more fruitfully.

PSALM 82

Against Israel's Enemies

For Help Against the Enemies of the Church

*Israel's enemies band together from all sides against
 her, bent upon her destruction. Confident that God
 will not abandon his people, the psalmist invokes God's
 vengeance upon the foe.*

The title of the psalm:

Psalm

A prayer that God may heed Israel's distress:

- 82 **N**oli, Dómine, tacére; * **O** God, be not silent; hold
noli silére, Deus, ne- not thy peace, O God,
que quíescere! nor be thou still!
- 3 Nam ecce inimíci tui For behold thy foes make
tumultuántur, * et qui a tumult, and they that
odérunt te, extóllunt ca- hate thee, lift up their
put. heads.
- 4 Contra pópulum tuum They devise schemes
moliúntur consília, * et against thy people, and
consúltant contra pro- plot against those whom
tectos tuos. thou dost protect.
- 5 “Veníte, ajunt, disper- “Come, say they, let us de-
dámus eos, ne sint pópu- stroy them, that they may
lus, * neve memorétur not be a people, and the
nomen Israël ultra.” name of Israel may be re-
membered no more.

The names of the foes:

- 6 Vere, consúltant uno Verily, with one heart they
corde, * et contra te ine- consult together, and they
unt fœdus: form a league against thee.
- 7 Tentória Edom et Is- The tents of Edom and the
maëlítæ, * Moab et Aga- Ismaelite, Moab and the
réni, Agarene,
- 8 Gebal et Ammon et Gebal and Ammon and
Amalec, * Philistæa cum Amalec, the Philistine with
incolis Tyri; them that dwell in Tyre.
- 9 Etiam Assýrii se con- The Assyrians also have
sociavérunt cum eis, * joined with them, they
brácchia præbuérunt fi- have lent their arms to the
liis Lot.— sons of Lot.

*May God destroy the enemy that they may acknowl-
edge his supremacy:*

- 10 Fac illis sicut Má dian, Do to them as to Madian
* sicut Sisaræ, sicut Ja- as to Sisara, as to Jabin at
bin ad torrémentem Cison, the torrent Cison.
- 208 Qui interémpti sunt Who were slain at Endor

- apud Endor, * facti sunt sterquilinium terræ. who became a dung-pit for the earth. *Psalm*
1. Principes ejus similes fac Oreb et Zeb, * similes Zebece et Sálmana omnes Juces eórum, Make their princes like Oreb and Zeb, all their leaders like Zebee and Sálmana, **82**
- 3 Qui dixerunt: * "Occupemus nobis regiónés Dei." Who said: "Let us seize the lands of God for ourselves."
- 11 Deus meus, fac eos similes fóliis túrbine rotátis, * stípulæ ante ventum. O my God, make them like leaves whirled in the whirlwind, like straw before the wind.
- 13 Sicut ignis qui combúrit silvam, * et sicut flamma quæ exúrit montes, Like the fire that burns up the forest, and like the flame that sets the mountains on fire,
- 16 Ita perséquare eos tempestáte tua, * et procélla tua contúrba eos. So do thou pursue them with thy tempest, and trouble them with thy storm.
- 17 Imple fácies eórum ignominía, * ut quærant nomen tuum, Dómine. Fill their faces with shame, so that they may seek thy name, O Lord.
- 18 Erubéscant et conturbéntur in ætérnum, * et confundántur et péreant. Let them be ashamed and troubled forever, and let them be confounded and perish.
- 19 Et cognóscant te, cujus nomen est Dóminus, * solum esse Excélsum super totam terram. And let them know that thou, whose name is Lord, art alone the Most High above all the earth.

Commentary

The psalmist (Asaph) here calls upon God to help Israel against an alliance of neighboring nations which, with the help of Assyria, are bent on Israel's extermination.

10-19: He then expresses his hope that their warlike designs will meet the fate of past aggressors—that they will be swept away by God's power like dust and chaff in the wind or as a forest consumed by fire. Then will they acknowledge the Lord as master of the earth.

Psalm

Reflection

83 **I**n the Old Testament God sometimes confounded his enemies through the hand of a woman, as when Jahal killed Sisara, and Holofernes was slain by Judith. Such women are types of Mary, who by giving birth to Jesus overcame our greatest enemy, Satan.

PSALM 83

Love for the Temple

To Obtain a Love for God's House

Devotion of the pilgrims on their journey to the temple of God in Jerusalem. They are filled with a longing for God and a love for his holy house.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Secundum For the choir-master. To the
"Torcularia . . ." Filiorum melody of "The Winepresses."
Core. Psalmus. A psalm of the sons of Core.

Delight in the House of the Lord:

- 2 **Q**uam dilécta habitátio **H**ow beloved is thy dwell-
tua, Dómine exercí- tua, O Lord of hosts!
tuum! * 3 desíderat, lan- My soul longs, faints with
guens concupiscit áni- yearning for the courts of
ma mea átria Dómini; the Lord;
Cor meum et caro mea My heart and my flesh re-
* exsúltant ad Deum vi- joice unto the living God.
vum.

- 4 Etiam passer invénit Even the sparrow has
domum, * et hirúndo ni- found a house, and the
dum sibi, ubi ponat pul- swallow a nest for herself.
los suos: where she may lay her
young:

Altária tua, Dómine ex- Thy altars, O Lord of
ercítuum, * rex meus et hosts, my King and my
Deus meus!— God!

Joy of those making pilgrimages to the temple:

- 5 Beáti qui hábitant in Blessed are they that
domo tua, Dómine, * per- dwell in thy house, O Lord,
pétuo laudant te. they praise thee contin-
ually.

Beátus vir, cujus auxili- Blessed is the man whose
lium est a te, * cum help is from thee, when he
sacra itinera in ánimo has pilgrimages in his
habet: heart.

Transeúntes per vallem Passing across a parched
áridam, fontem fácient valley, they shall make it a
eam, * ac benedictióni- source of wells, and the
bus véstiet eam plúvia first rain shall clothe it
prima. with blessings.

Procédent de róbre in They shall go from
robur; * vidébunt Deum strength to strength: they
deórum in Sion. shall see the God of gods in
Sion.

The pilgrim's prayer:

Domine exercituum, O Lord of hosts, hear my
audi oratióncm meam; prayer; give ear, O God of
* áuribus pércipe, Deus Jacob! Jacob!

Clípeus noster, áspice, Behold, O God, our shield,
Deus, * et réspice fáciem and look on the face of
uncti tui. thine anointed.

Vere, mélior est dies Truly, better is one day in
unus in átriis tuis * thy courts than a thousand
quam álíi mille; others;

Consistere malo in lí- I prefer to stand on the
mine domus Dei mei, * threshold of the house of
quam morári in taber- my God, than to dwell in
naculis peccatórum. the tents of sinners.

Nam sol et clipeus est For the Lord God is a sun
Dóminus Deus: * grá- and a shield: the Lord be-
tiam et glóriam largítur stows grace and glory,
Dóminus,

Non negat bona eis * He does not deny good
qui ámbulant in inno- things to them that walk in
centia. innocence.

Dómine exercituum, * Blessed is the man that
beátus homo qui confí- trusts in thee, O Lord of
dit in te. of hosts.

Psalm

Commentary

84

This psalm (of the sons of Core) like psalms 41 and 42 expresses the psalmist's deep longing for the joy of dwelling in the sanctuary of the Lord. He would rest near God's altars as a bird secure in its nest. For those who so rest are happy, ever praising the Lord.

5-8: He then describes the joy of the pilgrim going up to Sion. The sense of the Hebrew in verses 6-8: "Happy the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart (desire) is the holy pilgrimage to Sion. All the way seems so beautiful to pilgrims: (the dry valleys seem blessed with water) that they grow ever stronger until they reach God on Mount Sion."

9-13: He begs the Lord to satisfy his longing to go up to Sion because one day in his sanctuary—even in the lowest capacity—is better than a thousand elsewhere among wicked men. For God blesses the virtuous man who trusts in him.

Reflection

We should show love for our Church by visiting it when we are not bound to do so by precept. The majority of the Jews had to travel far to their Sanctuary. We have a church almost at our very door.

PSALM 84

The Work of Salvation

For Those in Deep Sorrow

Prayer for the complete restoration of Israel after the captivity. The psalm foreshadows the work of the Messiah saving men from the captivity of sin and the devil.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Magistro chori. Filiorum Core. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of the sons of Core.

God has forgiven and returned his people from exile:

- 2 **P**ropítius fuísti, Dómine, terræ tuæ; * bene vertisti sortem Jacob. **T**hou hast been gracious, Lord, to thy land; thou hast turned to good the lot of Jacob.
- 3 Dimisísti culpam pópu-li tui; * operuísti ómnia peccáta eórum. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered all their sins.
- 4 Continuísti omnem iracúndiam tuam, * destitísti a furóre iræ tuæ.— Thou hast curbed all thy anger, thou hast desisted from the fury of thy wrath

A prayer for complete liberation:

Psalm

84

Restítue nos, Deus Salvátor noster, * et depóne indignatióem tuam advérsus nos. Restore us, O God our Saviour, and put away thine indignation against us.

Num in ætérnum irascéris nobis, * aut exténdes iram tuam in omnes generatióes? Wilt thou be angry with us forever, or wilt thou extend thy wrath unto all generations?

Nonne tu vitam restítues nobis, * et pópulus tuus lætábitur in te? Wilt thou not restore life to us, and shall not thy people rejoice in thee?

Osténde nobis, Dómine, misericórdiam tuam, * et salútem tuam da nobis.— Show us, O Lord, thy mercy, and grant us thy salvation.

Israel's future blessings:

Audiam, quid loquátur Dóminus Deus: * profecto lóquitur pacem Pópulo suo et sanctis suis * et eis qui corde convertúntur ad eum. I will listen to what the Lord God will say: he will indeed speak peace unto his people and unto his saints and unto them that are converted to him in their heart.

Certe propínqua est salus ejus tíméntibus eum, * ut hábitet glória in terra nostra. Surely his salvation is near to them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

Misericórdia et fidélitas óbviám vénient sibi, * justítia et pax inter se osculabúntur. Mercy and truth shall meet each other; justice and peace shall kiss each other.

Fidélitas germinábit ex terra, * et justítia de cælo prospiciet. Faithfulness shall sprout from the earth, and justice shall look down from heaven.

Dóminus quoque dabit bonum, * et terra nostra dabit fructum suum. The Lord also will give the good, and our earth shall yield its fruit.

Justítia ante eum incé- Justice shall go before 213

Psalm det, * et salus in via grés- him, and salvation in the
suum ejus. way of his steps.

85

Commentary

This psalm (of the sons of Core) thanks the Lord for bringing the Israelites back from the Babylonian exile, pardoning their sins.

5-8: But the psalmist asks divine aid for his people in present difficulties.

9-14: Then he predicts prosperity if the people sincerely turn to the Lord. If they reverence the Lord, the glory of their land will be re-established, the divine mercy and justice rewarding the people's fidelity with prosperity and peace.

Reflection

By alliances with the heathen the Israelites paved the way for their captivity. We should avoid temptations lest we be led into servitude by the devil.

PSALM 85

Prayer in Adversity

For the Grace of a Virtuous Life

Prayer for help in sorrow and wretchedness. David bases his confidence on God's incomparable nature, which even the heathen will be forced to acknowledge.

An appeal to God's goodness:

1 Precatio. Davidis.

A prayer of David.

Inclína, Dómine, aurem tuam, exáudi me, * quia miser et pauper sum ego. **I**ncline thy ear, O Lord, hear me, because I am wretched and poor.

2 Custódi ánimam meam, quia devótus sum tibi; * salvum fac servum tuum sperántem in te. Preserve my soul, because I am faithful to thee; save thy servant that hopes in thee.

3 Deus meus es tu: misere-re mei, Dómine, * quia assidue ad te clamo. Thou art my God: have mercy on me, O Lord, for I constantly cry unto thee.

4 Lætífica ánimam servi tui, * quia ad te, Dómine, ánimam meam attóllo. Give joy to the soul of thy servant, for to thee, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Tu enim, Dómine, es bonus et clemens, * ple-
nus misericórdiæ in om-
nes qui invocant te.

For thou, O Lord, art good
and kind, full of mercy for
all that call upon thee.

Psalm
85

Auscúлта, Dómine, ora-
tionem meam, * et at-
ténde ad vocem obseca-
tiónis meæ.

Hearken to my prayer, O
Lord, and give heed to the
voice of my pleading.

Die tribulatiónis meæ
clamo ad te, * quia ex-
áudies me.—

In the day of my trouble I
cry unto thee, because thou
wilt hear me.

An appeal to God's omnipotence:

Non est tibi par inter
deos, Dómine, * et non
est opus símile óperi tuo:

There is none among the
gods equal to thee, O Lord,
and there is no work like
unto thy work:

Omnes gentes, quas fe-
cisti, vénient et adorá-
bunt te, Dómine, * et præ-
dicábunt nomen tuum.

All the nations, which
thou hast made, shall come
and adore thee, O Lord, and
they shall proclaim thy
name.

Quia magnus es tu et
facis mirabilia: * tu so-
lus es Deus.—

For thou art great and
dost wonderful things:
thou alone art God.

A promise of thanksgiving:

Doce me, Dómine, viam
tuam, ut ámbulem in
veritaté tua; * dirige cor
meum, ut timeat nomen
tuum.

Teach me, O Lord, thy
way, that I may walk in thy
truth; guide my heart, that
it may fear thy name.

Celebrábo te, Dómine,
Deus meus, toto corde
meo, * et prædicábo no-
men tuum in ætérnum,

I will praise thee, O Lord,
my God, with my whole
heart, and I will proclaim
thy name forever,

Quia misericórdia tua
magna fuit erga me, * et
eripuísti ánimam meam
de profúndis inférni.

Because thy mercy has
been great toward me, and
thou hast delivered my soul
from the depths of hell.

Psalm

A prayer for deliverance.

85

Deus, superbí insurrex- O God, the proud have
érunt contra me, et tur- risen up against me, and a
ba præpoténtium insidi- crowd of powerful men plot
átur vitæ meæ, * neque against my life, nor do they
te ponunt ante óculos place thee before their eyes
suos.

- 15 Sed tu, Dómine, Deus But thou, O Lord, art a
miséricors es et bení- God of mercy and mild.
gnus, * tardus ad iram, slow to anger, most kind
summe clemens et fidélis. and faithful.
- 16 Réspice in me et mise- Look upon me and have
rere mei; * da robur tu- mercy on me; give thy
um servo tuo, et salvum strength to thy servant.
fac fílium ancillæ tuæ. and save the son of thy
handmaid.
- 17 Signum da mihi favóris Give me a sign of thy
tui, ut vídeant, qui odé- favor, that they who hate
runt me, et confundán- me may see and be con-
tur, * quod tu, Dómine, founded, because thou, O
adjúveris me et consolá- Lord, hast helped me and
tus sis me. comforted me.

Commentary

The psalmist (David in the title) asks in affliction that the merciful and forgiving Lord hear his constant prayer.

8-10: The Lord alone, God without equal, is wonderful and deserves the homage of nations, because by his wondrous work he shows himself the only true God.

11-17: The psalmist then asks to be taught the Lord's ways, so he can praise him. For the Lord lovingly protects him from danger when powerful and godless men attack him, showing himself patient, merciful, and faithful. So he prays that the Lord will have mercy on him now and prove to his enemies that God is his protector.

Reflection

The things of this world God has given man as aids, not as obstacles, to the supreme goal of his existence, heaven. They must always be

PSALM 86

Psalm
86

Sion Our Mother

For Those Seeking Peace through the Church

The past and future glories of Jerusalem. This psalm is a prophetic vision of the Church, the true Sion, the mother of all nations and source of every blessing.

The glory of Sion, city of God:

Filiorum Core. Psalmus. A psalm of the sons of Core. A Canticum. canticle.

Fundationem suam in montibus sanctis diligit Dominus: * portas Sion magis quam omnia tabernacula Jacob. The Lord loves his foundation in the holy mountains: the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Gloriosa prædicantur æ te, * civitas Dei!— Glorious things are told of thee, O city of God!

Sion, the mother of all nations:

Accensébo Rahab et Babel coléntibus me: * ecce, Philistæa et Tyrus populúsque Æthiopum: hi nati sunt illic. I will add Rahab and Babel to them that worship me: behold, Philistaea and Tyre and the people of the Ethiopians: these were born there.

Et de Sion dicétur: “Virítim omnes sunt nati in ea, * et ipse firmávit eam Excélsus.”— And of Sion it shall be said: “Man by man were born in her, and the Most High himself made her strong.”

Dóminus scribet in libro populórum: * “Hi nati sunt illic.” The Lord shall write in the book of the peoples: “These were born there.”

Universal rejoicing of the citizens of Sion:

Et cantábunt, dum chorum ducent: * “Omnes fontes mei sunt in te.” And they shall sing as they lead the dance: “All my fountains are in thee.”

Commentary

This psalm (of the sons of Core) exalts Sion. Sion is the Lord's dwelling-place, his favorite city, the famous city of God.

Psalm 4-7: Sion will be a source of blessings and glory to the nations that acknowledge themselves her sons. They will boast with joy that she is the whole source of their good.

87

Reflection

The gates of the Church, the new Sion, are our priests. Through them men enter the Church. Pray every day that God may make them worthy of their calling, and that through them many converts will be drawn to Christ.

PSALM 87

Conduct in Desolation

For Those Who Suffer Interior Trials

The prayer of a just man in grievous affliction. Apparently abandoned by God he seems to be on the verge of despair. The psalm may be applied to Christ's abandonment on the cross.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Canticum. Psalmus. Filiorum Core. Magistro chori. Ad cantandum. Heman Ezrahita. A canticle. A psalm of the sons of Core. For the choir-master. To the melody of "Mahalat." For singing. A maskil of Heman the Ezrahite.

A description of the psalmist's sufferings with a plea for help:

- 2 **D**ómine, Deus meus, **O** Lord, my God, I cry by
intérdiu clamo, * nocte laméntor coram te. day, in the night I weep before thee.
- 3 Pervéniat ad te orátio mea, * inclína aurem tuam ad clamórem meum. Let my prayer come unto thee: incline thine ear to my cry.
- 4 Nam saturáta est malis ánima mea, * et ínferis vita mea propínquat. For my soul is full of evils and my life is on the verge of the grave.
- 5 Accéñseor descendéntibus in fóveam, * símilis factus sum viro inválido. I am counted among them that go down into the pit. I am become like a man without strength.
- 6 Inter mórtuos est stratum meum, * sicut occísórum, qui in sepúlcro jacent, My bed is among the dead, as that of the slain, who lie in the tomb,

Quorum non es memor Whom thou rememberest *Psalms*
 amplius * et qui a cura no more, and who are cut
 tua sunt sejuncti. off from thy care. **87**

Collocásti me in fóvea Thou hast laid me in a
 profunda, * in ténebris, deep pit, in darkness, in the
 in vorágine. abyss.

Super me gravat indi- Thine indignation weighs
 gnatio tua, * et ómnibus upon me, and with all thy
 fluctibus tuis ópprimis waves thou dost overwhelm
 me. me.

Removísti notos meos Thou hast taken my
 a me; abominábilem fe- friends away from me;
 cisti me illis, * clausus thou hast made me abomi-
 sum, neque égređi pos- nable to them; I am shut
 sum.— up, and I cannot go forth.

If he dies, he can no longer praise God:

Oculi mei ob misériam Mine eyes waste away
 tabéscunt, clamo ad te, with grief; daily I cry unto
 Dómine, quotidie; * ex thee, I stretch out my
 pándo ad te manus meas. hands to thee.

Num pro mórtuis facis Dost thou do wonders for
 mirabilia? * an defúnti the dead? or shall the de-
 surgent, et laudábunt parted rise up and praise
 te? thee?

Num enarrátur in se- Shall thy goodness be de-
 púlcro bóntas tua, * fi- clared in the tomb, thy
 délitus tua apud inferos? faithfulness in the land of
 the dead?

Num manifestántur in Shall thy wonders be
 ténebris mirabilia tua, * made clear in the dark, and
 et grátia tua in terra thy mercy in the land of
 oblivíonis?— forgetfulness?

A plea that God grant some relief in his extreme distress:

Ego autem ad te, Dó- But I cry unto thee, O
 mine, clamo, * et mane Lord, and in the morning
 orátio mea ad te venit. my prayer comes to thee.

Quare, Dómine, repéllis Why, O Lord, dost thou
 ánimam meam, * abs- cast off my soul, why dost

- Psalm 88** cóndis fáciem tuam a thou hide thy face from me?
 Miser sum ego et moribúndus inde a púero; * I am afflicted and near death from my boyhood. I
 portávi terróres tuos et have borne thy terrors and
 elángui. I have grown weak.
 17 Super me transiérunt Thy wrath has swept over
 iræ tuæ, * et terróres tui me, and thy terrors have
 me perdidérunt. destroyed me.
 18 Circúmdant me ut aqua They surround me like
 perpétuo; * circumvéni- water all the time; they a
 unt me omnes simul. sail me all together.
 19 Removísti a me amí- Thou hast taken from me
 cum et sodálem: * fami- friend and companion: the
 liares mei sunt ténebræ. darkness is my intimate.

Commentary

This psalm (of the collection of the sons of Core by Ethan, the Ezrahite) is a cry to the Lord for help. He is on the verge of death, helpless. He feels like one abandoned by God to death, so overwhelming are the floods of God's wrath. Even his friends regard him as accursed; he is overcome with grief.
 10-13: In spite of his affliction, the psalmist continues to pray and asks God how he can know and praise his wonders in the darkness of the grave.

14-19: So he calls upon the Lord and asks why he does not regard his prayer, since he is in such a pitiable state as a result of his anger, wholly overwhelmed by misery, alone in his dark dejection.

Reflection

This psalm typifies the sorrows of the Messiah: his betrayal by Judas, his reproaches, scourging, and cross, his death with thieves. Do we realize fully that Jesus endured such bitter sorrow and misery out of love for us?

PSALM 88

God's Great Promises

Prayer in Time of Depression

The magnificent promises God made to David compared with the decline of the dynasty. Relying on God's faithfulness the psalmist prays for a renewal of his favors.

The title of the psalm:

Ethan Ezrahita.

A maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

Psalm

God's truth and faithfulness:

88

Grátias Dómini in ætérnum cantábo; * per omnes generatiónes annuntiábo fidelitátem tuam ore meo.

Dixísti enim: "In ætérnum fundáta est grátia"; * in cælo stabilísti fidelitátem tuam.

"Inii foedus cum elécto meo; * jurávi David, servo meo:

Usque in ætérnum stabíliam semen tuum, * et fundábo in omnes generatiónes thronum tuum." —

The attributes of God; his power, fidelity, love and equity:

Cæli mirabília tua celebrant, Dómine, * et fidelitátem tuam in cœtu sanctórum.

Nam quis in núbibus æquábitur Dómino, * símilis erit Dómino inter filios Dei?

Deus est terríbilis in concílio sanctórum, * magnus et treméndus præ ómnibus circa eum.

Dómine, Deus exercítuum, quis par est tibi? * potens es, Dómine, et fidélitas tua circúdat te.

The mercies of the Lord I will sing forever; with my mouth I will make known thy faithfulness through all the ages.

For thou hast said: "Mercy is founded forever;" thou hast established thy faithfulness in heaven.

"I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David, my servant:

I will settle thy seed forever, and I will establish thy throne unto all generations."

The heavens proclaim thy wonders, O Lord, and thy faithfulness in the assembly of the holy.

For who in the clouds shall be compared to the Lord, who among the sons of God shall be like unto the Lord?

God is terrible in the council of the holy ones, great and dreadful above all around him.

O Lord, God of hosts, who is equal to thee? Thou art mighty, O Lord, and thy faithfulness surrounds thee.

Psalm Tu ímperas supérbiæ. Thou rulest the pride of
 88 maris, * tumórem flú- the sea, thou curbest the
 ctuum ejus tu compé- surging of its waves.
 scis.

11 Tu transfixum concul- Thou hast trampled upon
 cásti Rahab, * brácchio Rahab as one that is
 poténti tuo dispersísti pierced, with thy mighty
 inimícos tuos. arm thou hast scattered
 thy foes.

12 Tui sunt cæli, et tua est Thine are the heavens,
 terra; * orbem terrárum and thine is the earth; thou
 et quod eum replet tu hast founded the whole
 fundásti; world and what fills it;

13 Aquilónem et austrum The north and the south
 tu creásti; * Thabor et thou hast created; Thabor
 Hermon et nómine tuo and Hermon exult in thy
 exsúltant. name.

14 Tibi brácchium potens Thou hast a mighty arm;
 est, * firma manus tua, thy hand is strong, thy
 dextera tua erécta. right hand uplifted.

15 Justítia et jus sunt fun- Justice and right are the
 daméntum throni tui; * foundation of thy throne.
 grátia et fidélitas præcé- grace and faithfulness go
 dunt te. before thee.

Happy the people who have such a God:

16 Beátus pópulus qui ex- Blessed is the people that
 sultáre novit; * ámbu- know how to rejoice; they
 lant, Dómine, in lúmine walk, O Lord, in the light of
 vultus tui, thy face,

17 De nómine tuo lætán- In thy name they rejoice
 tur semper, * et justítia always, and in thy justice
 tua extollúntur. they are lifted up.

18 Nam tu es splendor For thou art the glory of
 poténtiæ eórum, * et tuo their might, and by thy
 favóre extóllitur cornu grace our horn is exalted.
 nostrum.

19 Nam Dómini est clipeus For our shield is of the
 noster, * et Sancti Israël Lord, and our king of the
 222 rex noster. Holy One of Israel.

The promise to David about his eternal rule:

Psalm
88

Olim locútus es in vi-
sione sanctis tuis et dixi-
ti: * "Impósui corónam
poténti; éxtuli eléctum
te populo.

In time past thou didst
speak in a vision to thy
saints and thou didst say:
"I placed a crown upon a
mighty one; I have raised
up a chosen man from my
people.

Invéni David, servum
neum, * óleo sancto meo
inxí eum,

I have found David, my
servant: with my holy oil I
have anointed him,

Ut manus mea sit sem-
per cum eo, * et brác-
hium meum confirmet
eum.

So that my hand is always
with him and my arm
strengthens him.

Non decipiet eum ini-
micus, * neque malignus
léprimet eum.

The enemy shall not de-
ceive him, nor the malig-
nant one oppress him.

Sed contúdam coram
o adversários ejus, * et,
ui odérunt eum, percú-
iam.

But I will break his en-
emies to pieces before him,
and I will smite them that
hate him.

Fidélitas mea et grátia
nea cum ipso; * et in
iómíne meo extollétur
ornu ejus.

My faithfulness and my
mercy shall be with him,
and in my name shall his
horn be lifted up.

Et exténdam super ma-
c manum ejus, * et su-
per flúmina dexteram
jus.

And I will stretch out his
hand over the sea, and his
right hand over the rivers.

Ipse vocábit me: "Pa-
ter meus es tu, * Deus
neus et petra salútis
meæ."

He shall cry unto me:
'Thou art my Father, my
God, and the rock of my
salvation!'

Atque ego primogéni-
um constitúam eum, *
elsíssimum inter reges
erræ.

And I will make him
my firstborn, the highest
among the kings of the
earth.

In ætérnum servábo ei

I will keep my grace for **223**

Psalm grátiam meam, * et firmum manébit ei fœdus meum. him forever, and my covenant shall hold firm for him.

88

³⁰ Et ætérnum fáciám semen ejus, * et thronum ejus ut dies cæli. And I will make his seed to be everlasting, and his throne as the days of heaven.

³¹ Si derelíquerint filii ejus legem meam, * neque ambuláverint in præcéptis meis, If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my precepts;

³² Si violáverint statúta mea, * nec custodierint mandáta mea: If they break my statutes, and do not keep my commands:

³³ Virga púniam delíctum eórum, * et verbéribus culpam eórum; I will punish their offense with a rod, and their sin with stripes;

³⁴ Sed grátiam meam non súbtraham ei, * nec fidem meam fallam. But I will not draw my favor from him, nor will I belie my trust.

³⁵ Non violábo fœdus meum, * neque effátum labiórú meórum mutábo. I will not violate my covenant, nor change the utterance of my lips.

³⁶ Semel jurávi per sanctitátem meam: * Davídi certe non méntiar, Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will certainly not lie to David,

³⁷ Semen ejus in ætérnum manébit * et thronus ejus coram me erit ut sol, His seed shall abide forever and his throne shall be as the sun before me,

³⁸ Ut luna, quæ manet in ætérnum, * testis in cælo fidélis." As the moon, which lasts forever, a faithful witness in heaven."

The present state of affairs in sad contrast to the promise:

³⁹ Tu vero reppulísti et abjecísti, * gráviter irátus es uncto tuo. But thou hast rejected and cast off, thou hast been very angry with thine anointed.

224 Sprevísti fœdus servi Thou hast spurned the

tui, * profanásti humi covenant of thy servant, *Psalm*
corónam ejus. thou hast profaned his crown on the ground. **88**

Diruísti omnes muros Thou hast overthrown all
ejus, * munições ejus his walls, his ramparts
excídio tradidísti. thou hast given up to ruin.

Diripuérunt eum omnes All that pass by the way
transeúntes per viam, * have robbed him, he has be-
ludibrio factus est vicí- come a laughing-stock for
nis suis. his neighbors.

Extulisti déxteram ini- Thou hast lifted up the
micórum ejus; * imple- right hand of his foes;
visti gáudio omnes ho- thou hast filled all his
stes ejus. enemies with joy.

Retudisti áciem gládii Thou hast blunted the
ejus, * nec sustentásti keenness of his sword, and
eum in prœlio. thou hast not upheld him
in battle.

Cessáre fecísti splen- Thou hast made his glory
dórem ejus, * et thro- to cease, and thou hast cast
num ejus in terram de- his throne down to the
jecísti. ground.

Breviásti dies adule- Thou hast shortened the
scéntiæ ejus, * operuísti days of his youth, thou hast
eum ignominia.— covered him with disgrace.

A prayer for relief:

Quóúsque, Dómine? How long, O Lord? wilt
abscóndes te semper? * thou hide thyself forever?
ardébit ut ignis indigná- shall thy wrath burn like a
tio tua? fire?

Meménto, quam brevis Remember how short my
sit víta mea, * quam ca- life is, how weak thou hast
dúcos creáveris omnes made all men.
hómines.

Quis est, qui vivat nec Who is the man that can
 vídeat mortem, * qui e live on and not see death?
 manu inferi súbtrahat who can deliver himself
ánimam suam? from the power of the
grave?

- Psalm* Ubi sunt grátia tuæ Where are thy old-time
88 antíquæ, Dómine, * quas favors, O Lord, which thou
 David jurásti per fideli- didst pledge to David in
 tatem tuam? faithfulness?
- 51 Meménto, Dómine, con- Remember, O Lord, the re-
 tuméliæ servórum tuó- proach of thy servants: I
 rum: * porto in sinu meo bear in my bosom all the
 omnes inimicitias gén- enmities of the gentiles,
 tium,
- 52 Quibus insúltant ad- Wherewith thy enemies
 versárii tui, Dómine, * revile, O Lord, wherewith:
 quibus insúltant gréssi- they revile the steps of
 bus uncti tui. thine anointed.
- 53 Benedíctus Dóminus in Blessed be the Lord for
 ætérnum: * fiat! fiat! evermore! Amen! amen!

Commentary

The psalmist (here Ethan the Ezrahite) first recalls the mercies and fidelity of the Lord, who solemnly promised (cf. 2 Kings 7, 4ff.) that the royal line of David would last forever.

6-19: Then he praises the wondrous deeds of the Lord's fidelity. Nothing can be compared with God, mighty and faithful. Mighty in ruling the sea, in crushing Rahab (Egypt) mighty as creator of all things. His mighty hand administers justice with kindness and fidelity. Blessed are the people who serve such a God. They rejoice, for they are upheld by his justice and power—he is their king.

20-38: He once chose David and promised that he would have his support against all enemies, that his fidelity and goodness would extend his dominion, that he would be as a firstborn son of God. This agreement was to establish David's line forever. God will chastise its sins but not forsake it forever. The God will not change for he solemnly swore it.

39-46: But now he has rejected David, destroyed his Sanctuary, allowed the foes of Israel to oppress her in disgrace.

47-52: He asks God to deliver him, out of pity for his mortal frailty, and as a rebuke to the godless men who are insulting him, God's anointed.

53: A doxology ends the third Book of the psalms.

Reflection

226 **G**od often has to punish us in order to bring us to our senses. When everything is going well, we are prone to abuse our many blessings.

PSALM 89

Psalm

Eternity and Time

89

To Obtain the Gift of Wisdom

*The eternity of God and the fleeting years of man.
The shortness of human life is a consequence of sin.
God's mercy will recompense us for the miseries endured in this life.*

God's eternity and man's frailty:

Precatio. Moysis, viri Dei.

A prayer of Moses, the man of God.

Dómine, tu fuísti refú-
gium nobis * a gene-
ratione in generationem.

O Lord, thou hast been a
refuge for us from gen-
eration to generation.

Priusquam montes gi-
gnerentur et nasceretur
terra et orbis, * et ab
ætérno in ætérnum tu
es, Deus.

Before the mountains
were brought forth and the
earth and the world were
born, and from everlasting
to everlasting thou art, O
God.

Revérti jubes mortáles
in púlverem, * et dicis:
“Revertimini, filii hómi-
num.”

Bid men return to dust,
and say: “Return ye, chil-
dren of men.”

Nam mille anni in ócu-
lis tuis tamquam dies
hesternus sunt qui trans-
iit, * et tamquam vigília
noctúrna.

For a thousand years in
thy sight are as yesterday,
which has passed away,
and as a watch in the night.

Abripis eos: fiunt ut
sómniū matutínū, *
ut herba viréscens:

Thou tearest them away:
they become like a morn-
ing dream, like grass that
shoots up.

Mane floret et viret, *
véspere succíditur et aré-
scit.—

In the morning it flour-
ishes and is green, in the
evening it is mowed down
and withers away.

Israel because of its sins is under the cloud of God's anger:

Vere consúpti sumus In truth we are consumed 227

Psalm ira tua, * et indignatióne by thy wrath, and troubled
tua conturbáti. by thine indignation.

89

Posuisti culpas nostras Thou hast set our iniqui-
in conspéctu tuo, * pec- ties before thine eyes, our
cáta nostra occúlta in secret sins in the light of
lúmine vultus tui. thy countenance.

9 Nam omnes dies nostri For all our days have
transiérunt in ira tua; * passed away in thy anger
finivimus annos nostros we have ended our years
ut suspírium. like a sigh.

10 Summa annórum no- The sum of our years is
strórum sunt septuagín- seventy, and, if we are
ta anni * et, si válidi strong, eighty;

Et plerique eórum sunt And most of them are toil
labor et vánitás: * nam and emptiness: for they
cito tránseunt, et nos swiftly pass, and we fly
avolámus. away.

11 Quis perpéndit potén- Who has weighed the
tiam iræ tuæ, * et pro power of thy anger, and
débito tibi timóre indi- thine indignation as due
gnatiónem tuam?— fear of thee demands?

12 Dinumeráre nos doce Teach us to number our
dies nostros, * ut perve- days, that we may arrive at
niámus ad sapiéntiam wisdom of heart.
cordis.

A prayer for the return of God's favor:

13 Revértere, Dómine. — Return, O Lord. — how
quóusque? * et propítius long? — and be kind to thy
esto servis tuis. servants.

14 Sátia nos cito miseri- Fill us speedily with thy
córdia tua, * ut exsul- mercy, that we may rejoice
témus et lætémur cun- and be glad all our days.
ctis diébus nostris.

15 Lætífica nos pro diébus Gladden us for the days
quibus nos afflixísti, * when thou hast afflicted us
pro annis quibus vidi- for the years in which we
mus mala. have seen evils.

228 Appáreat servis tuis Let thy work appear unto

opus tuum, * et glória thy servants, and thy glory *Psalm*
 ua filiis eorum, unto their children, **90**
 Et bónitas Dómini Dei And may the kindness of
 nostri sit super nos, et the Lord our God be upon
 pus mánuum nostrá- us, and prosper thou the
 um secúnda nobis, * et work of our hands for us,
 pus mánuum nostrá- and give success to the
 um secúnda. work of our hands.

Commentary

The title ascribes this psalm to Moses. The psalmist praises the Lord as the eternal refuge of Israel, and contrasts the eternity of God with the frail, transitory nature of man.

7-11: Israel is withering away because of the Lord's displeasure at her sin. The life of man is a brief sigh (verse 9) in the Hebrew: "For all our days vanish away in thy wrath; we bring to an end our years as quickly as a sigh" of seventy years, in the strong, eighty years—all of them marked with pain. So the psalmist wishes to understand God's power and his displeasure.

12-17: He asks to be shown the number of his days, that he may be truly wise. He then prays that the Lord will turn from anger to kindness, giving joy in return for the affliction suffered and revealing his favor to his children, making firm their work.

Reflection

If we take refuge in God, and dwell in him by faith, hope and charity, he will be our citadel against the attacks of the devil.

PSALM 90

Blessed Confidence

Realization of God's Personal Interest in Me

The security of belief and confidence in God. The psalm exhorts the just man to a firm trust in God in all troubles of life, promising certain divine protection.

God is a secure refuge for those trusting in him.

Qui degis in præsidio **O** thou who dwellest in
 Altíssimi, * qui sub the shelter of the Most
 mbra Omnipoténtis High, who abidest under
 ommoráris, the shadow of the Al-
 mighty,

Dic Dómino: "Refúgi- Say to the Lord: "My ref- **229**

Psalm 90 **um meum et arx mea, * uge and my stronghold, my Deus meus, in quo con- God, in whom I trust."**
fido."

God's providential care of the just:

- 3 Nam ipse liberábit te For he will deliver the
de láqueo venántium, * a from the snare of the hunt
peste perniciosá. ers, from the deadly pesti
lence.
- 4 Pennis suis próteget te, He will shelter thee with
et sub alas ejus confú- his pinions, and thou
gies: * scutum et clipeus shalt take refuge under
est fidelitas ejus. his wings: his faithfulness
is a shield and buckler.
- 5 Non timébis a terróre Thou shalt fear neither
noctúrno, * a sagítta the terrors of the night, nor
volánte in die, the arrow that flies by day
- 6 A peste quæ vagátur in Neither the pestilence that
ténébris, * a pernície prowls in the darkness, nor
quæ vastat merídie. the destruction that lay
waste at noonday.
- 7 Cadant a látere tuo Though a thousand fall at
mille, et decem mília a thy side, and ten thousand
dextris tuis: * ad te non at thy right hand, it shall
appropinquábit. not come nigh unto thee.
- 8 Verúmtamen óculis tu- But with thine eyes thou
is spectábis * et mercé- shalt behold and shalt see
dem peccatórum vidébis. the reward of the wicked.

How God helps the just:

- 9 Nam refúgium tuum est For the Lord is thy refuge
Dóminus, * Altíssimum thou hast made the Most
constituísti munímen High thy defense.
tuum.
- 10 Non accédet ad te ma- No evil shall come unto
lum, * et plaga non thee, no plague shall draw
appropinquábit taberná- nigh to thy tent,
culo tuo,
- 230 Quia Angelis suis man- For to his angels he has
dávít de te, * ut custó- given thee in trust, to keep

liant te in ómnibus viis thee in all thy ways.
uis.

Psalm

90

In mánibus suis portá- In their hands they shall
unt te, * ne offéndas ad bear thee up, lest thou dash
ápídem pedem tuum. thy foot against a stone.

Super áspídem et vípe- Thou shalt tread upon the
am gradiéris, * concul- asp and the viper, thou
ábis leónem et dracó- shalt trample under foot
iem.— the lion and the dragon.

God's own assurance:

Quóniam mihi adhæ- Because he has cleaved to
it, liberábo eum; * pró- me, I will deliver him; I
egam eum, quia cognó- will protect him, because
it nomen meum. he has known my name.

Invocábit me et exáu- He shall call upon me and
liam eum; cum ipso ero I will hear him; I will be
n tribulatióne, * erí- with him in trouble, I will
iam eum et honorábo rescue him and honor him.
um.

Longitúdine diérum sa- I will fill him with length
iábo eum,* et osténdam of days, and I will show him
i salútem meam. my salvation.

Commentary

The theme of this psalm (anonymous in the Hebrew) is God's protection of those who trust him.

3-8: Addressing the just man, the psalmist asserts that God saves such a man from all snares, shelters him under his wings, and shields him. So they fear no terrors of night, nor arrow by day, nor the pestilence that prowls at night and ravages at noon-day. Though thousands fall, no harm reaches such men. They behold God's vengeance on the wicked.

9-13: Since God is the hope and the refuge of the psalmist, he is assured that no harm can come to him. God's angels will guard him so that he will not dash his foot against a stone, or come to harm from dangerous beasts.

14-16: God answers this hope by promising his protection to the just. He will hear his prayer to rescue and bring honor to him—giving him a long life under his protection.

Reflection

May the angels of God ever encamp around us as they stood by the prophet Eliseus, to protect us against the assaults of our enemy, the

Psalm 91 devil! But let us never displease the angels by sinning. There is a legend about St. Frances of Rome, that she was favored with an actual vision of her guardian angel, seeing him withdraw when she fell into voluntary sin, and then return on her repentance.

PSALM 91

Divine Perfections

To Obtain Delight in Prayer

The justice of the Lord, who rewards the good and punishes the evil. God often permits the wicked to prosper, but finally brings them to destruction.

The title of the psalm:

- 1 Psalmus. Canticum. Pro die A psalm. A canticle. For the sabbati. Sabbath.

God's goodness and fidelity:

- 2 **B**onum est celebrare **I**t is good to give praise to Dóminum, * et psál- the Lord, and to sing lere nómini tuo, Altís- thy name, O Most High: sime:

- 3 Annuntiáre mane mi- To proclaim thy mercy in sericórdiam tuam * et the morning, and thy fidelitátem tuam per faithfulness every night. noctes

- 4 Psaltério decachórdo et With the ten-stringed lyra, * cum cántico ad psaltery and the lyre, with cítharam. a canticle for the harp.

- 5 Nam deléctas me, Dó- For thou dost delight me mine, factis tuis, * de O Lord, with thy deeds, opéribus mánuum tuá- rejoice in the works of thy rum exsúlto.— hands.

God punishes the wicked:

- 6 Quam magnífica sunt How great are thy works ópera tua, Dómine, * O Lord, how deep thy quam profúndæ cogita- thoughts! tiónes tuæ!

- 7 Vir insípiens non co- The senseless man know gnóscit, * et stultus non not and the fool under- stans not these things.

Etsi impii floreant ut Although the ungodly *Psalms*
herba, * et splendeant flourish like grass, and all
omnes male agéntes, the workers of iniquity **91**
shine forth.

Excídio destinántur They are doomed to ever-
scúpitérno: *, tu autem lasting destruction: but
in atérnum excélsus es, thou, O Lord, art the Most
Dómine.— High forever.

The triumph of the just:

Nam ecce inimici tui, For behold thy enemies, O
Domine, nam ecce ini- Lord, for behold thy ene-
mici tui peribunt: * di- mies shall perish: all the
spérgéntur omnes male workers of iniquity shall be
agéntes. scattered.

Extulisti sicut cornu Thou hast exalted my
búbali cornu meum; * horn like the horn of the
perfúdisti me óleo purís- wild ox; thou hast anointed
simo. me with the purest oil.

Et óculus meus despé- And mine eye has looked
xit inimícos meos, * et down upon my foes, and my
de insurgéntibus contra ears have heard glad things
me malignis læta audié- of the wicked that rise up
runt aures meæ.— against me.

God's goodness towards the just:

Justus ut palma floré- The just man shall flour-
bit, * sicut cedrus Líba- ish like the palm tree, he
ni crescet. shall grow like the cedar of
Libanus.

Plantáti in domo Dó- They that are planted in
mini, * in átriis Dei no- the house of the Lord, shall
stri florébunt. flourish in the courts of our
God.

Fruetum ferent étiam Even in old age they shall
in senectúte, * sucósi et bear fruit, they shall be suc-
végeti erunt. culent and sprightly,

Ut annúntient, quam That they may make
rectus sit Dóminus, Pe- known how upright is the
tra mea, * neque iniqui- Lord, my Rock, and that
tátem esse in eo. there is no iniquity in him.

Psalm

Commentary

92 **T**his psalm is a hymn of thanksgiving and rejoicing to the Lord for his goodness and fidelity shown to the psalmist in wondrous works.

6-9: He is mystified at the depths of the divine plans. Wicked men cannot understand such things; nor do they understand that the Lord's enemies are doomed to destruction, while the Lord will remain forever on high.

10-16: The enemies of the Lord will perish, while the psalmist will flourish (so the sense of the "exaltation of the horn" and the "anointing with fresh oil" in verse 11). He will see the downfall of his enemies. He will flourish like a choice tree planted in the Temple of the Lord.

Reflection

"How great are thy works, O Lord" (v. 6). Regarding such St. Paul has said: "Since the creation of the world his invisible attributes are clearly seen—his everlasting power also and divinity—being understood through the things that are made" (Rom. 1, 20). Wherefore, St. Basil the Great has rightly called creation the "school of souls."

PSALM 92

The Mighty Ruler

In Praise of Faith

The Lord, King of the world. God is enthroned upon the earth. The efforts of his enemies are in vain, while the just should keep his law and respect his Temple.

God's eternal sovereignty:

1 **D**óminus regnat, majestatem indútus est, **T**he Lord reigns, he is clothed with majesty,
* indútus est Dóminus, the Lord is clothed with
poténtiam, præcínxit se, might, he has girded himself,

Et firmávit orbem terrarum, * qui non commovébitur. And has established the whole world, which shall not be moved.

2 Firma est sedes tua ab ævo, * ab ætérno tu es.— Firm is thy throne from the beginning, thou art from everlasting.

The triumph of his kingdom:

Psalms

93

Extóllunt flúmina, Dó- The floods lift up, O Lord,
mine, extóllunt flúmina the floods lift up their
vocem suam, * extóllunt voice, the floods lift up
flúmina fragórem suum. their thunder.

Poténtior voce aquá- Mightier than the voice
rum multárum, potén- of many waters, mightier
tior æstibus maris: * than the surges of the sea:
potens in excélsis est mighty is the Lord in the
Dóminus.— highest.

Gratitude to God:

Testimónia tua fide di- Exceedingly reliable are
gna sunt valde; * do- thy testimonies; holiness
num tuam decet sánc- becomes thy house, O Lord,
tas, Dómine, in longitú- unto length of days.
dinem diérum.

Commentary

The psalmist, David according to the title, praises the Lord as King ruling eternally in secure majesty over his creation.

3-4: The Lord's majesty is revealed in the wonders of the sea, but his majesty in Heaven is greater.

5: The Lord's moral law is sure and holy; worship is ever due him in his Temple.

Reflection

Christ emphasized unity of faith in season and out of season. At the Last Supper he prayed for his apostles: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name . . . that they may be one." To show that unity of faith was intended also for the multitudes in the ages yet to come he added: "Yet not for these only do I pray, but for those also who through their word are to believe in me" (John 17, 20).

PSALM 93

God's Vengeance

For Those Fearful of Harm from Evildoers

A prayer against the enemies of Israel. The foolish boasting of evildoers is short-lived. God, who sees and knows all things will destroy them, and justice shall triumph.

Psalm Let God arise in judgment against the tyranny of sinners:

93 **D**eus ultor, Dómine, * **O** Lord, avenging God, O
Deus ultor, affúlge. avenging God, shine
forth.

2 Exsúrge, qui júdicas Rise up, thou who judgest
terram; * redde, quod the earth; render to the
meréntur, supérbis. proud what they deserve.

3 Quoúsque ímpii, Dómi- How long shall the wicked,
ne, * quoúsque ímpii O Lord, how long shall the
gloriabúntur, wicked glory?

4 Effútient, loquéntur in- How long shall they bab-
solénter, * jactábunt se ble, speak haughtily, boast,
qui patrant iníqua?— they who are evildoers?

5 Pópulum tuum, Dómi- They trample upon thy
ne, concúlcant, * et here- people, O Lord, and afflict
ditátem tuam affligunt; thine inheritance;

6 Víduam et peregrínium They slay the widow and
trucídant, * et occídunt the stranger, and murder
pupílos. the fatherless.

7 Et dicunt: Non videt And they say: the Lord
Dóminus, * neque advér- does not see, nor does the
tit Deus Jacob.— God of Jacob give heed.

God will chastise the wicked:

8 Intelligite, stulti in pó- Understand, ye fools
pulo, * et insipiéntes, among the people, and ye
quando sapiétis? senseless, when will you be
wise?

9 Qui plantávit aurem, He that made the ear
non áudiet? * aut, qui shall he not hear? or he
finxit óculum, non vidé- that formed the eye, shall
bit? he not see?

10 Qui érudit gentes, non He that instructs the na-
castigábit? * qui docet tions, shall he not punish?
hómínes sciéntiam? he that teaches men knowl-
edge?

11 Dóminus novit cogita- The Lord knows the
tiónes hómínium: * sunt thoughts of men: that they
enim inánes. are vain.

The possession of God's Law:

Psalm

93

Beátus vir, quem érudit, Dómine * et ínstruis lege tua,

Ut des ei réquiem a diébus malis, * donec ímpio fovea fodiátur.

Neque enim reiciet Dóminus pópulum suum, * et hereditátem suam non derelinquet;

Sed ad justítiam redíbit judícium, * eámque sequéntur omnes recti corde.—

Blessed the man whom thou teachest, O Lord, and instructest by thy law,

That thou mayest give him rest from evil days, until the pit be dug for the wicked.

For the Lord will not reject his people, nor will he forsake his own inheritance;

But judgment shall return to justice, and all the upright of heart shall follow it.

God has been Israel's champion:

Quis consúrget pro me contra male ágéntes? * quis stabit pro me contra patrántes iníqua?

Nisi Dóminus juváret me, * brevi habitáret in loco siléntii ánima mea.

Cum cógito: "Vacíllat pes meus," * grátia tua, Dómine, me susténtat.

Cum anxietátes multiplicántur in corde meo, * consolatiónes tuæ deléctant ánimam meam.—

Who will rise up for me against evildoers? Who will stand up for me against them that work iniquity?

If the Lord were not to help me, my soul would soon dwell in the place of silence.

When I think: "My foot is stumbling," thy mercy, O Lord, upholds me.

When anxieties are increased in my heart, thy comfortings delight my soul.

The wicked will be punished:

Num sociábitur tecum tribúnal iníquum, * quod vexatiónes creat sub specie legis?

Shall the tribunal of the unjust have fellowship with thee which makes trouble under the likeness of law?

- Psalm* Invádant ánimam ju- Let them assail the soul of
 94 sti, * et ságuinem in- the just man, and let them
 nocéntem condémnet: condemn innocent blood:
 22 Dóminus certe erit præ- The Lord will surely be a
 sídium mihi, * et Deus protection for me, and my
 meus petra refúgii mei. God the rock of my refuge
 23 Et repéndet illis iniqui- And he will repay them
 tátem eórum, et ipsó- their iniquity, and will de-
 rum malítia perdet eos, stroy them by their own
 * perdet eos Dóminus malice, the Lord our God
 Deus noster. will destroy them.

Commentary

This psalm (Davidic in Greek and Vulgate, anonymous in the Hebrew) calls upon the Lord as Judge to punish the arrogant oppressors of his people. These wicked men believe that the Lord does not consider their doings.

8-11: Such sinners are senseless. The Creator of the senses of man must know; the punisher of nations must punish sinners, for he knows their evil intentions.

12-19: The just man is happy in his knowledge of the law of God, realizing that sinners will be punished, and the good will not be forsaken. Justice will ultimately prevail, the Lord in the meantime supporting the psalmist.

20-23: The Lord is not an ally of unjust judges; he is the refuge of the psalmist, destroying sinners by their own sins.

Reflection

We must never waver in our confidence about God's providence, so that he will never chide us as he did Peter on the waters of Genesareth, when he stretched forth his hand saying: "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?" (Matt. 14, 31).

PSALM 94

The Summons to Praise

To Excite Fervor in Prayer

Exhortation to praise and obey God. As our Creator he is deserving of all praise, as our God adoration is his due, and as our supreme Lord and King we owe him all obedience.

A call to praise God for his perfections:

Psalm

94

Veníte, exsultémus Dómino, acclamémus Petráe salútis nostræ: accedámus in conspéctum ejus cum láudibus, cum cánticis exsultémus ei.

Nam Deus magnus est Dóminus, et Rex magnus super omnes deos: in manu ejus sunt profunda terræ, et altitúdines móntium ipsíus sunt.

Ipsíus est mare: nam ipse fecit illud, et terra sicca, quam formavérunt manus ejus: „ veníte, adorémus et procidámus, et génua flectámus Dómino qui fecit nos.

Come, let us rejoice unto the Lord, let us shout with joy to the Rock of our salvation: let us come into his presence with praises, with songs let us rejoice unto him.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King over all the gods: in his hand are the depths of the earth, and the heights of the mountains are his.

The sea is his: for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands formed: come, let us adore and fall down, and kneel to the Lord who made us.

Israel must avoid the sins of its ancestors:

Nam ipse est Deus noster; nos autem pópulus páscuæ ejus et oves manus ejus.

Utinam hódie vocem ejus audiátis: „Nolíte obduráre corda vestra ut in Meríba, ut die Massa in desérto, „ ubi tentarérunt me patres vestri, probavérunt me, etsi víderant ópera mea.

For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

Oh, that you may hear his voice this day: “Harden not your hearts as in Meríba, as on the day of Massa in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted me, they tried me, although they had seen my works.

Quadragínta annos tæduit me generatiónis illíus, et dixi: Pópulus errans corde sunt, et

Forty years long I was offended with that generation, and I said: they are a people erring in heart,

Psalm non novérunt vias meas. and they have not learned
 95 Ideo jurávi in ira mea: my ways. Therefore I
 non introíbunt in réqui- swore in my wrath: they
 em meam." shall not enter into my
 rest."

Commentary

This psalm is ascribed to David in the Syriac, Greek and Vulgate, and by St. Paul (Hebrews 4, 7). The psalmist invites all to praise the Lord, King above all gods. He is the sustainer and creator of the earth.

6-11: All are called upon to worship their creator and shepherd. Then the psalmist, speaking in God's name, warns the people not to be rebellious as their ancestors were in the Exodus; for the Lord punished that generation with forty years of wandering in the desert.

Reflection

When Holy Mother the Church invites us to praise God in the various services of the liturgical year, such as the Lenten devotions, we should be willing to forego worldly pleasures and recreations, and come before God in thanksgiving.

PSALM 95

Advent of the King

Act of Adoration of Christ, King

God is King and Judge of the world. All nations should acknowledge him and worship him in his Sanctuary. All nature should unite with men in one great song of praise and homage.

A call to praise the majesty of God:

- 1 **C**antáte Dómino cánti- **S**ing to the Lord a new
 cum novum, * cantá- song, sing to the Lord,
 te Dómino, omnes terræ. all the earth.
- 2 Cantáte Dómino, bene- Sing to the Lord, bless his
 dicite nómini ejus, * an- name, proclaim his salva-
 nuntiáte de die in diem tion from day to day.
 salútem ejus.
- 3 Enarráte inter gentes Tell his glory among
 glóriam ejus, * in ómni- the heathen, his wonders
 bus pópulis mirabília among all peoples.

Nam magnus est Dóminus et laudándus valde, * timéndus magis quam omnes dii. For the Lord is great and to be praised exceedingly, he is to be feared above all gods. *Psalms* **95**

Nam omnes dii gentium sunt figménta; * Dóminus autem cælos fecit. For all the gods of the gentiles are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

Majestas et decor præcedunt eum; * poténtia et splendor sunt in sede sancta ejus.— Majesty and beauty go before him; might and glory are in his holy dwelling-place.

An appeal to the nations to acknowledge the Messianic King:

Tribúite Dómino, famíliæ populórum, tribúite Dómino glóriam et poténtiam; * tribúite Dómino glóriam nóminis ejus. Give to the Lord, ye kindreds of the peoples, give to the Lord glory and might; give to the Lord the glory of his name.

Offérte sacrificium et introíte in átria ejus; * adoráte Dóminum in ornátu sacro. Offer sacrifice and go into his courts; adore the Lord in holy attire.

Contremisce coram eo, univérſa terra; * dícite inter gentes: Dóminus regnat. Tremble before him, all the earth; say among the heathen: The Lord reigns.

Stabilívit orbem, ut non moveátur: * regit pópulos cum æquitáte.— He has established the world, so that it be not moved: he rules the people with justice.

All nature joins in the nations' welcome.

Latentur cæli, et exsultet terra; * ínsonet mare et quæ illud implent; * géſtiat campus et ómnia quæ in eo sunt. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar and the fullness thereof; let the field exult and all that is therein.

Tum gaudébunt omnes Then all the trees of the 241

Psalm 96 árbores silvæ ¹³ coram forest shall be joyful before
 Dómino, quia venit, * the Lord, for he comes, for
 quia venit régere terram. he comes to rule the earth.
 Reget orbem terrárum He will rule the world with
 cum justítia, * et pópu- justice, and the peoples
 los cum fidelitáte sua. with his truth.

Commentary

The psalmist (David, according to the Greek and Vulgate) calls upon all the earth to sing of the Lord's salvation, proclaiming his superiority over all the gods. Holy and magnificent is his Sanctuary.

7-10: All nations are called upon to join the worship in the Sanctuary and to proclaim him as King. He is the Creator and Judge of all the peoples.

11-13: He again calls on all nations to join the rejoicing, for God comes to exercise justice in truth.

Reflection

Among her many other beautiful feasts the Church has given us that of Christ the King. Let us bow ourselves in homage to our Sovereign on that day!

PSALM 96

Deeds of the King

For the Conversion of Idolaters

God, King of the world. He rules with justice to the joy of all the just. He confounds those who worship idols, but he watches over the just and saves them from the wicked.

Nature rejoices at the coming forth of the King:

Dóminus regnat: ex- **T**he Lord reigns: let the
 súltet terra, * lætén- earth rejoice, let many
 tur ínsulæ multæ. islands be glad.

2 Nubes et caligo circú- Clouds and darkness sur-
 dant eum, * justítia et round him, justice and
 jus fundaméntum sunt right are the foundation of
 sólii ejus. his throne.

3 Ignis ante ipsum præ- Fire goes before him, and
 cédit, * et combúrit in burns up his enemies
 circúitu inimícos ejus. round about.

242 Fúlgura ejus collú- His lightnings illumine

strant orbem; * terra the world; the earth sees *Psalm*
videt et contremiscit. and trembles.

Montes ut cera liqué- The mountains melt like
scunt coram Dómino, * wax before the Lord, before
coram dominatóre uni- the ruler of the whole
versæ terræ. earth.

Cæli annúntiant justí- The heavens proclaim his
tiam ejus; * et omnes justice; and all peoples see
pópuli vident glóriam his glory.
ejus.—

96

False gods fade away; Israel rejoices:

Confundúntur omnes All are confounded that
qui colunt sculptília et worship graven images
qui gloriántur in idólis; and that glory in idols; all
ante eum se prostér- the gods fall down before
nunt omnes dii. him.

Audit, et lætátur Sion, Sion hears and is glad,
et exsúltant civitátes Juda and the cities of Juda re-
da * propter judícia tua, joice because of thy judg-
Dómine. ments, O Lord.

Nam tu, Dómine, ex- For thou, O Lord, art
celsus es super omnem most high over all the
terram, * summe émi- earth, supremely eminent
nens inter omnes deos. among all the gods.

The triumph of justice:

Dóminus diligit eos, qui The Lord loves them that
odérunt malum, custódit hate evil, he watches over
animas sanctórum suó- the souls of his saints, he
rum, * de manu impió- rescues them from the
rum éripit eos. hand of the wicked.

Lux óritur justo, * et Light springs forth for the
rectis corde lætítia. just man, and gladness for
the upright of heart.

Lætámini, justí, in Dó- Rejoice, ye just, in the
mino, * et celebráte no- Lord, and glorify his holy
men sanctum ejus. name.

Commentary

In the Greek and Vulgate this psalm is attributed to David.
The psalmist hails the Lord as King over the earth. The

Psalm 97 power of his justice as exercised against his enemies is described in terms of the storm and earthquake, in which all men behold his glory.

7-9: Worshipers of idols are confounded and Sion rejoices when God shows himself superior to the universe and the false gods (in verse 7c the Greek translates the Hebrew "gods" by "angels"; St. Paul quotes the Greek in Hebrews 1. 6).

10-12: The lovers of the Lord must hate evil. Since his reward is salvation, happiness is the lot of the upright and they are grateful to his holy name.

Reflection

When Christ told Pilate that he was the King of Truth, the governor felt an impulse for higher things within him. But surrendering to temptation, he rose from the seat of justice, passed the King of Justice by, and went forth to the din of the crowd outside.

PSALM 97

Praise to the King

For the Missionary Spirit

Thanksgiving to God for victorious intervention on behalf of Israel. The heathen and all creation are called upon to join her in singing joyfully to the Lord, who comes for the salvation of all.

Praise to God for help to Israel:

¹ Psalmus.

A psalm.

Cantáte Dómino cánticum novum, * quia mirabilia fecit. **S**ing to the Lord a new song, because he has done wonderful things.

Victóriám parávit ei dextera ejus, * et brá-chium sanctum ejus. His right hand and his holy arm have prepared for him the victory.

² Notam fecit Dóminus salútem suam; * in conspéctu géntium revelávit justitiam suam. The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his justice in the sight of the heathen.

³ Recordátus est bonitátis et fidelitátis suæ * in grátiam domus Israë́l. He has remembered his goodness and faithfulness toward the house of Israel.

244 Vidérunt omnes fines All the ends of the earth

terræ * salútem Dei nostri.— have seen the salvation of our God. *Psalm*

97

Let all the earth salute its King:

Exsultáte Dómino, omnes terræ, * lætámini et gaudéte et psállite. Shout joyfully to the Lord, all ye lands, be glad and rejoice and make melody.

Psállite Dómino cum cíthara, * cum cíthara et sónitu psaltérii, Make melody to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the sound of the psaltery,

Cum tubis et sono búcinæ: * exsultáte in conspéctu regis Dómini.— With trumpets and the sound of the horn: shout joyfully before the Lord the King.

Nature to join in the rejoicing:

Insonet mare et quæ illud replent, * orbis terrárum et qui hábitant in eo. Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof, the world and those that dwell therein.

Flúmina plaudant má-nibus, * simul montes exsúltent Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains rejoice together

Coram Dómino, quia venit, * quia venit régere terram. Before the Lord, because he comes, because he comes to rule the earth.

Reget orbem terrárum cum justítia * et pópulos cum æquitáte. He will rule the world with justice and the peoples with fairness.

Commentary

This psalm is ascribed to David in the Greek and in the Vulgate. The singer invites all to praise the Lord for a signal and saving victory, showing the Lord's justice, mercy, and fidelity towards Israel before all the world.

4-6: The Lord is to be praised with all manner of music.

7-9: All nature—sea, river, mountains—should join in the praising of him who justly judges the world and its peoples.

Reflection

We can show our gratitude to God for his favors by helping those less fortunate than ourselves. Remember that we should always practice the corporal works of mercy.

Holiness of the King

To Obtain Zeal for Personal Sanctity

God's enthronement in Sion as King of the universe. The Lord is a great King, yet merciful to all who call upon him, as can be seen from the Patriarchs whose prayers he heard.

God is praised as universal King:

- 1 **D**óminus regnat: tremunt pópuli; * sedet super Chérubim: movétur terra. **T**he Lord reigns: the people tremble; he sits above the Cherubim: the earth is moved.
- 2 Dóminus in Sion magnus * et excélsus super omnes pópulos. The Lord is great in Sion and high above all the people.
- 3 Célebrent nomen tuum magnum et treméndum: * sanctum est illud.— Let them praise thy great and terrible name: it is holy.
- 4 Et regnat potens qui justítiam díligit: tu stabilísti quæ recta sunt, * justítiam et jus tu exérces in Jacob. And the mighty one reigns who loves justice: thou hast established the things that are right, thou dost justice and right in Jacob.
- 5 Extóllite Dóminum Deum nostrum, et procumbite ad scabéllum pedum ejus: * sanctum est illud.— Extol ye the Lord our God, and fall down before his footstool: it is holy.

The holiness of God:

- 6 Móyses et Aaron sunt inter sacerdótes ejus, et Sámuel inter eos qui invocábant nomen ejus: * invocábant Dóminum, et ipse exaudiébat eos. Moses and Aaron are among his priests, and Samuel among them that used to call upon his name, they called upon the Lord, and he heard them.
- 7 In colúmna nubis loquebátur ad eos: * audiébat mandáta ejus, et He spoke to them in the pillar of the cloud: they heard his commandments.

præceptum, quod dedit and the statute which he *Psalm*
eis. gave them. 99
Dōmine, Deus noster, O Lord, our God, thou
tu exaudisti eos; Deus, didst hear them; O God,
propitius fuisti eis, * sed thou wast merciful to
ultus es injūrias eōrum. them, but thou didst
avenge their wrong-doing.
Extollite Dōminum De- Extol ye the Lord our God,
um nostrum, et procū- and fall down before his
bile ad montem sanctum holy mountain: for holy is
ejus: * nam sanctus est the Lord, our God.
Dōminus, Deus noster.

Commentary

The psalmist in the Syriac, Greek and Vulgate is identified as David. He proclaims the Lord King fearfully enthroned above the Cherubim on Mount Sion, and calls for reverent praise of his name.

4-5: He praises the Lord as King of justice in Israel, and invites Israel to worship in his Sanctuary.

6-9: He recalls how the Lord answered the prayers of Moses, Aaron and Samuel—his faithful priests—but how he also punished their failings. So the Lord should be worshiped on Sion, for he is holy.

Reflection

We should prostrate ourselves in wonderment and gratitude before God, who is all holiness and yet eager to pardon our sins.

PSALM 99

Entering the Temple

To Serve God with Joy in All Things

Thanksgiving hymn of those entering the Temple. All both Jew and Gentile, are invited to proclaim the goodness, mercy and faithfulness of God, their Creator and Shepherd.

The title of the psalm:

1 Psalmus. Ad gratiarum acti- A psalm. For thanksgiving.
onem.

The whole world is called to worship God:

Exultáte Dōmino, om- **R**ejoice unto the Lord, all
nes terræ; * 2 servíte ye lands; serve the Lord
Dōmino cum lætítia; with gladness;

Psalm Introite in conspéctum Go into his presence with
 100 ejus * cum exsultatióne. exceeding great joy.
 Scitóte Dóminum esse Know ye that the Lord is
 Deum: ipse fecit nos et God: he made us, and we
 ipsíus sumus, * pópulus are his, his people and the
 ejus et oves páscuæ ejus. sheep of his pasture.

God is all goodness and truth.

- 4 Introite portas ejus cum Enter his gates with
 laude, átria ejus cum praise, his courts with a
 hymno; * celebráte eum, hymn; glorify him, bless
 benedicite nómini ejus. his name.
 5 Nam bonus est Dómi- For the Lord is good, his
 nus, in ætérnum miseri- mercy is forever, and his
 córdia ejus, * et in gene- faithfulness from genera-
 ratióne et generatió- tion to generation.
 nem fidélitas ejus.

Commentary

This anonymous psalm invites the people to come to the Temple chanting the praises of the Lord, their Creator and Shepherd.

4-5: He repeats the invitation to praise and thank the Lord for his eternal goodness, mercy and fidelity.

Reflection

The Jewish High Priest alone was permitted to enter God's presence in the Holy of Holies, and only on the solemn feast of Atonement. We are permitted to draw near the Eucharistic presence at any time. What a sublime privilege is ours!

PSALM 100

A Model Ruler

To Obtain Perseverance in a Virtuous Administration

Resolutions of a good king. He will be guided in his rule by mercy and justice. Therefore, he will avoid all evildoers and will employ as his servants only the pure of heart.

The king resolves to lead a life above reproach:

- 1 Davidis. Psalmus.

A psalm of David.

248 **G**rátiam et justítiam **I** will sing of kindness and
 cantábo; * tibi, Dó- justice; to thee, O Lord.
 mine, psallam. I will sing praises.

Incédam in via imma- I will set my steps in the *Psalms*
culáta: * quando vénies unsullied way: when wilt **100**
ad me? thou come unto me?

Ambulábo in innocén- I will walk in the inno-
tia cordis mei * in domo cence of my heart within
mea. my house.

Non ponam ante óculos I will not set any unjust
meos * rem injústam; thing before my eyes;

Faciéntem prævarica- I hate the worker of
tiones ódio hábeo: * non iniquity: he shall not
adhærébit mihi. cleave to me.

Cor pravam erit procul The perverse heart shall
a me; * quod malum est, be far from me; evil I will
non cognóscam. ignore.

In his court he will have virtuous ministers:

Detrahéntem occúlte The slanderer of his
 próximo suo: * hunc neighbor in secret: him I
perdam. will destroy.

Supérbum óculis et in- The man that has a high
flátum corde: * hunc look and a proud heart:
non tolerábo. him I will not endure.

Oculi mei respíciunt My eyes look upon the
fídeles terræ, * ut hábi- faithful of the land, that
tent mecum. they may dwell with me.

Qui ámbulat in via im- He that walks in the un-
maculáta, * hic mihi sullied way, he shall serve
ministrábit. me.

Non habitábit in domo He that works deceit shall
mea, * qui facit dolum. not dwell in my house.

Qui lóquitur mendácia, He that speaks lies shall
non subsístet * coram not remain before my eyes.
óculis meis.

Quotídie perdam * om- Daily I will destroy all the
nes peccatóres terræ, sinners of the land,

Extérminans de civítá- Driving out all evildoers
te Dómini * omnes male from the city of the Lord.
ágentes.

Psalm

Commentary

101 David (according to the title) here praises the Lord's goodness and justice; and he meditates on his obligation to be perfect even in his private life, never condoning evil.

5-8: So he will have no dealing with the slanderer, the proud or the covetous; he will favor the faithful and choose only the good as his intimates. He will work daily to wipe out all evil doers from his kingdom.

Reflection

Modern rulers may draw a very practical lesson from this psalm. In the choice of their assistants they should not be guided by mere political motives, but they should favor men who will have the welfare of the people at heart.

PSALM 101

Prayer in Anguish

To Obtain the Spirit of Penance

Prayer of Israel in exile for the restoration of Sion, that the name of the Lord may be praised in Jerusalem, and that all nations seeing his glory may fear and serve the Lord.

The title of the psalm:

- ¹ *Preces afflicti qui defessus angorem suum ante Dominum profundit.* A prayer of the afflicted one who, being weary, pours out his trouble before the Lord.

An appeal to God in the extremity of distress:

- ² **D**ómine, exáudi orationem meam, * et clamor meus ad te veniat. Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come unto thee.
- ³ *Noli abscondere faciem tuam a me * die angustiae meae.* Hide not thy face from me in the day of my distress.

*Inclína ad me aurem tuam: * quando te invoco, velóciter exáudi me.* Bow down thine ear to me: hear me speedily when I call upon thee.

- ⁴ *Nam dies mei evanescent ut fumus, * et ossa mea ut ignis ardent.* For my days vanish like smoke, and my bones burn like fire.

250 *Exústum, ut herba, aréscit cor meum, * obliví-* My heart, burned up like grass, withers away, I

scor comedere panem forget to eat my bread. *Psalm*
meum.

Propter veheméntiam Because of the violence of **101**
gémitus mei * adhærent my groaning my bones
ossa mea cuti meæ. cleave to my skin.

Símilis sum pelicáno I am like a pelican of the
desérti, * factus velut wilderness, I am become
nóctua in ruínis. like an owl in the ruins.

Insómnis sum et inge- I am sleepless and I la-
misco, * sicut avis soli- ment, like a bird all alone
tária in tecto. on the housetop.

Perpétuc insúltant mi- My enemies are always in-
hi inimíci mei; * qui sulting me; they that rage
furunt contra me, im- against me curse by my
precántur nómine meo. name.

Nam cúmerem cómedo For I eat ashes like bread,
tamquam panem, * et and I mingle my drink with
potum meum mísceo weeping,
cum fletu,

Propter indignatióem By reason of thine indig-
et furórem tuum, * quia nation and thy wrath, for
me extulisti et dejecísti. thou hast lifted me up and
hast cast me down.

Dies mei símiles sunt My days are like length-
umbræ proténsæ, * et ened shadows, and I wither
ego sicut herba arésco. like grass.

Tu autem, Dómine, in But thou, O Lord, abidest
ætérnum manes, * et forever, and thy name en-
nomen tuum in omnes dures unto all generations.
generatióes.

Israel is in exile, but God will save her:

Tu exsúrge et propítius Do thou rise up and be
esto Sion, * quia tempus merciful to Sion, because
est, ut misereáris ejus, it is time for thee to have
quia venit hora. pity on her, for the hour is
come.

Nam servi tui díligunt For thy servants love her
lápides ejus, * et ruínas stones, and they have pity
ejus commiserántur. on her ruins.

Psalm

101

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Et reverebúntur gentes
nomen tuum, Dómine, *
et omnes reges terræ
glóriam tuam,</p> | <p>And the nations shall fear
thy name, O Lord, and all
the kings of the earth thy
glory,</p> |
| <p>17 Cum Dóminus instau-
ráverit Sion, * apparúe-
rit in glória sua,</p> | <p>When the Lord shall re-
store Sion, shall appear in
his glory,</p> |
| <p>18 Convérterit se ad ora-
tiónem inopum, * nec
rejécerit oratiónem eó-
rum.</p> | <p>When he shall hearken
to the prayer of the needy
and shall not reject their
prayer.</p> |
| <p>19 Scribántur hæc pro ge-
neratióné ventúra, * et
pópulus qui creábitur,
colláudet Dóminum.</p> | <p>Let these things be writ-
ten for a future generation,
and let a people that shall
be created praise the Lord.</p> |
| <p>20 Nam Dóminus respéxit
de excélso sanctuário
suo, * de cælo prospéxit
in terram,</p> | <p>For the Lord looked down
from his high sanctuary,
from heaven he looked
upon the earth,</p> |
| <p>21 Ut audíret gémitus cap-
tivórum, * ut liberáret
addíctos morti,</p> | <p>That he might hear the
groans of the captives, that
he might deliver the ones
doomed to death,</p> |
| <p>22 Ut nomen Dómini an-
nuntiétur in Sion, * et
ejus laus in Jerúsalem,</p> | <p>That the name of the Lord
might be proclaimed in
Sion, and his praise in Je-
rusalem,</p> |
| <p>23 Quando pópuli congre-
gabúntur simul * et re-
gna, ut sérviant Dómino.</p> | <p>When the peoples shall be
gathered together, and the
kingdoms, to serve the
Lord.</p> |
| <p>24 Consúmpsit in via vires
meas, * præcídít dies
meos.</p> | <p>He has weakened my
strength in the way, he has
cut off my days.</p> |
| <p>25 Dico: Deus meus, ne
abstúleris me in dimídio
diérum meórum; * per
omnes generatiónes du-
rant anni tui.</p> | <p>I say: O my God, take me
not away in the midst of
my days; thy years endure
throughout all generations.</p> |

In primórdiis terram In the beginning thou *Psalm*
fundasti, * et opus má- didst found the earth and
num tuárum est cæ- heaven is the work of thy **101**
lum. hands.

Ista peribunt, tu autem They shall pass away, but
permanébis, * et univér- thou shalt abide, and all
sa sicut vestis veterá- things shall grow old like
scent. a garment.

Sicut vestiméntum mu- Like raiment thou
tas ea, et mutántur; * changest them, and they
tu autem es idem, et an- are changed: but thou art
ni tui non habent finem. the same, and thy years
have no end.

Filii servórum tuórum The children of thy serv-
habitábunt secúri, * et ants shall dwell untroubled,
semen eórum coram te and their seed shall endure
durábit. before thee.

Commentary

The psalmist begs the Lord to listen kindly and speedily answer his prayer.

4-12: He describes his pitiable state: his life slips away; his body is wasted and blighted like parched grass, for he cannot eat. He is like the lonely birds in his grief. Enemies and even friends revile him. Sorrow is his food, for the Lord's wrath has crushed him. His days decline towards death.

13-23: But the constant Lord will in his good time show mercy to those who mourn over the ruins of Sion. Then the nations will stand in awe of him and recount through the ages how he has rebuilt Sion and restored her inhabitants that they might praise him.

24-29: The psalmist then returns to the description of his personal plight and asks that his short life be spared by "the Lord who remains eternal, though all creatures change" (so the sense of the Hebrew in verses 26-28; St. Paul applies these words to our Lord in Hebrews 1, 10-12). He is sure the Lord will reestablish his people forever.

Reflection

Life is a warfare, and we cannot too frequently renew our confidence in God and the acceptance of our chalice of pain. "The Lord your God trieth you, that it may appear whether you love him with all your heart, and with all your soul, or not" (Deut. 13, 3).

Psalm
102

PSALM 102

Praise of God's Mercy

For Those Who Have Received Extraordinary Graces

Thanksgiving to God for his mercies. The psalmist's fervor is aroused to a high pitch by the thought of so much goodness shown by God towards himself personally and towards the chosen people.

Praise to God for his mercies:

- 1 Davidis. Of David.
Benedic, ánima mea, **B**less the Lord, O my soul
Dómino, * et ómnia, and let all that is with
quæ intra me sunt, nó- in me bless his holy name.
mini sancto ejus.
- 2 Bénedic, ánima mea, Bless the Lord, O my soul.
Dómino, * et noli oblivisci ómnia benefícia ejus, and do not forget all his
benefits,
- 3 Qui remittit omnes cul- Who pardons all thy
pas tuas, * qui sanat faults, who heals all thy in-
omnes infirmitates tuas, firmities,
- 4 Qui rédimit ab intéritu Who redeems thy life from
vitam tuam, * qui corón destruction, who crown
nat te grátia et misera- thee with kindness and
tióné, compassion,
- 5 Qui sátiat bonis vitam Who fills thy life with
tuam: * renovátur, ut good things: thy youth is
áquilæ, juvéntus tua.— renewed like the eagle's.

From the time of Moses God has shown his love:

- 6 Opera justitiæ patrat The Lord does deeds of
Dóminus, * et ómnibus justice, and exercises jus-
oppressis jus reddit. tice for all the oppressed.
- 7 Notas fecit vias suas He made known his ways:
Móysi, * fíliis Israël ópe- to Moses, his works to the
ra sua. children of Israel.
- 8 Miséricors et propítius The Lord is merciful and
est Dóminus, * tardus kind, slow to anger and
ad iram et ádmodum plenteous in mercy.
clemens.

254 Non in perpétuum con- He does not always strive,

téndit, * neque in ætér- nor is he angry forever. *Psalm*
num succénset. **102**

Non secúndum peccáta He does not deal with us
nostra agit nobíscum, * according to our sins, nor
neque secúndum culpas does he reward us accord-
nostras retribuit nobis. ing to our faults.

The greatness of God's mercy:

Nam quantum éminet For as high as heaven is
cælum super terram, * above the earth, so is his
tantum prævalet miseri- mercy mighty towards
córdia ejus erga timéntes them that fear him;
eum;

Quantum distat óriens As far as the east is from
ab occidente, * tam lon- the west, so far does he re-
ge rémovet a nobis delí- move our offenses from us.
cta nostra.

Quemádmódum mise- As a father has compas-
rétur pater filiórum, * sion on his children, the
miserétur Dóminus ti- Lord has compassion on
méntium se. them that fear him.

Ipse enim novit, cujus For he knows whose crea-
factúræ simus: * re- tures we are: he remembers
cordátur nos púlverem that we are dust.
esse.

God's mercy is eternal:

Hóminis dies sunt sí- Man's days are like grass;
miles fæno; * sicut flos like the flower of the field,
agri, ita floret: so he blooms:

Vix ventus perstrínxit The wind has barely swept
eum, non jam subsístit; over him, now he is gone;
* neque ultra cognóscit and his place knows him
eum locus ejus. no more.

Misericórdia autem Dó- But the mercy of the Lord
mini ab ætérno in ætér- is from eternity unto eter-
num erga timéntes eum, nity toward them that fear
* et justítia ejus erga him, and his justice toward
fílios filiórum, their children's children,

Erga eos qui servant Toward such as keep his
fœdus ejus, * et mémo- covenant, and are mindful

Psalm res sunt præceptorum of his precepts, to observe
ejus, ut faciunt ea.— them.

102

Let all creatures bless God:

- 19 Dóminus in cælo stá- The Lord has established
tuit sedem suam, * et his throne firm in heaven,
regnum ejus gubérnat and his kingdom rules all
unívérſa. things.
- 20 Benedícite Dómino, om- Bless the Lord, all ye his
nes Angeli ejus, poténtes angels, ye strong ones, who
virtúte, faciéntes jussa carry out his commands, to
ejus, * ut obœdiátis ser- fulfill his word.
móni ejus.
- 21 Benedícite Dómino, om- Bless the Lord, all ye his
nes exércitus ejus, * mi hosts, ye ministers of his,
nistri ejus, qui fácitis who do his will.
voluntátem ejus.
- 22 Benedícite Dómino, óm- Bless the Lord, all ye his
nia ópera ejus, in ómni works, in all places of his
bus locis potestátis ejus: dominion: O my soul, bless
* bédedic, ánima mea, thou the Lord.
Dómino.

Commentary

David (here the psalmist, if the title is correct) blesses the Lord for all his graces—pardon for sin, health and life his love, satisfying all desires with gifts that ever renew the psalmist's youth.

6-10: So the Lord deals with all the oppressed; so he did with the Israelites in the Exodus. Merciful and patient he curbs his anger, not punishing sinners as they deserve.

11-18: His infinite mercy takes away completely the sins of his faithful children. For as a father he pities frail human nature. His mercy is eternal for all who are faithful to his law.

19-22: This Lord reigns as King over all the universe; therefore all the creatures of Heaven and earth, and the psalmist himself, must bless him.

Reflection

There are times in life when we feel terribly alone, not wanted, not understood. We distrust advice, we are disobedient and headstrong. In such dangerous periods cling to God, who has spoken to us so consolingly in this psalm.

PSALM 103

Psalm

103

Praise of the Creator

For Acknowledging the Glory of God

Hymn in praise of creation. From the contemplation of the world the psalmist is filled with admiration for the majesty and wisdom of God manifested everywhere in his works.

God's greatness and majesty in creation:

Benedic, ánima mea, **B**less the Lord, O my soul!
Dómino! * Dómine, **O** Lord, my God, thou
Deus meus, magnus es art exceedingly great!
valde!

Majestátem et decórem Thou art robed with ma-
indulus es, * ꝑ amíctus jesty and beauty, clothed
límíne sicut pállío. with light as with a mantle.

Extendisti cælum sicut Thou hast stretched out
auláeum, * ꝑ exstruxisti the heavens like a canopy,
super aquas conclávia thou hast built thy upper
tua. rooms above the waters.

Nubes constitúis cur- Thou makest the clouds
rum tuum, * ámbulas thy chariot, thou walkest
super alas venti. upon the wings of the wind.

Núntios tuos facis ven- Thou makest the winds
tos, * et ministros tuos thy messengers and the
ignem ardéntem.— blazing fire thy ministers.

The formation of the earth and the seas:

Fundásti terram super Thou didst found the
bases ejus: * non vacil- earth upon its bases: it
lábit in sáeculum sáeculi. shall be steadfast for ever
and ever.

Océano ut vestiménto Thou didst cover it with
texísti eam, * super the ocean as with a gar-
montes stetérunt aquæ. ment, the waters stood
above the mountains.

Increpánte te fugérunt, At thy rebuke they fled
* te tonánte trepidárunt. away, at the sound of thy
thunder they trembled.

Ascendérunt montes, The mountains arose, the
descendérunt valles * in valleys sank down to the 257

Psalm locum quem statuisti eis. place which thou didst prepare for them.

103 Términum posuisti, Thou hast set a bound, quem non transgrediántur, * ne íterum opériant terram.— which they may not cross, lest they cover the earth again.

Springs and rain provide for men, animals and plants:

10 Fontes deflúere jubes in rivos * qui manant inter montes, Thou commandest springs to flow down into brooks that run between the mountains,

11 Potum præbent omni béstiæ agri: * ónagri extinguunt sitim suam; They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst;

12 Juxta eos hábitant vólucres cæli, * inter ramos edunt vocem. The birds of the air lodge near by, they pour forth their song amid the branches.

13 Rigas montes de conclávis tuis, * fructu óperum tuórum satiátur terra. Thou waterest the hills from thy upper rooms, the earth is sated with the fruit of thy works.

14 Producis gramen júmentis * et herbam, ut sérviat hómini, Thou makest grass to grow for cattle and herbage for the service of man,

Ut trahat panem de terra, * ¹⁵ et vinum quod lætíficet cor hóminis; That he may bring forth bread from the earth, and wine to cheer the heart of man;

Ut fáciem exhílalet óleo, * et panis refíciat cor hóminis. That he may make his face cheerful with oil; and that bread may strengthen man's heart.

16 Saturántur árbores Dómini, * cedri Líbani quas plantávit. The trees of the Lord have their fill, the cedars of Libanus which he planted.

17 Illic vólucres nidum ponunt; * cicóniæ domus sunt abietes. There the birds build their nests; the fir-trees are the home of the stork.

Montes excelsi ibíribus, The high mountains give *Psalm*
 * petræ hyrácibus per- refuge to wild goats, the
 fugium præstant.— rocks to conies. **103**

The purpose of the moon and sun:

Fecisti lunam ad tém- Thou hast made the moon
 pora signánda; * sol co- to mark the seasons; the
 gnóvit occásum suum. sun has known its going
 down.

Cum facis ténebras et When thou makest the
 óritur nox, * in ea va- darkness, and night falls,
 gántur omnes béstiæ in it rove all the beasts of
 silvæ. the woods.

Cátuli leónum rúgiunt The young lions roar after
 ad prædam, * et petunt prey, and seek their food
 a Deo escam sibi. from God.

Cum óritur sol, recé- When the sun rises, they
 dunt, * et in cubílibus steal away, and lie down in
 suis recumbunt. their dens.

Homo exit ad opus su- Man goes forth to his work
 um * et ad labórem and to his labor until the
 suum usque ad véspe- evening.
 rum.

The marvels of the sea; mystery of life:

Quam multa sunt ópera How many are thy works,
 tua, Dómine! * ómnia O Lord! Thou hast made all
 cum sapiéntia fecisti: things with wisdom: the
 plena est terra creatúris earth is full of thy crea-
 tuis. tures.

Ecce mare magnum et Behold the sea great and
 late patens: illic reptília wide: therein are things
 sine número, * animá- creeping innumerable, both
 lia parva cum magnis. small and great beasts.

Illic naves perámbu- There the ships pass, the
 lant, * Leviáthan, quem Leviathan, which thou
 fecisti, ut ludat in eo.— didst form, to play therein.

Omnia a te expéctant, All expect of thee, that
 * ut des eis escam tém- thou give them food in sea-
 pore suo. son.

Dante te eis cólligunt; What thou givest to them **259**

Psalm * aperiēte te manum they gather up; when thou
103 tuam, implēntur bonis. openest thy hand, they are
filled with good.

²⁹ Si abscōndis faciē tu- If thou hidest thy face,
am, turbāntur; si au- they are troubled; if thou
fers spīritum eōrum, de- takest away their breath,
cēdunt * et revertūntur, they die and return to their
in pūlverem suum. dust.

³⁰ Si emittis spīritum tu- If thou sendest forth thy
um, creāntur, * et réno- spirit, they are created, and
vas faciē terræ.— thou renewest the face of
the earth.

The eternal glory to the Creator:

³¹ Glória Dómini sit in May the glory of the Lord
ætérnum: * lætétur Dó- be forever: may the Lord
minus de opéribus suis, rejoice in his works,

³² Qui rēspicit terram, et Who looks upon the
tremīt; * tangit montes, earth, and it trembles;
et fumant. who touches the moun-
tains, and they smoke.

³³ Cantábo Dómino, donec I will sing to the Lord as
vivam; * psallam Deo long as I live; I will sing
meo, quámdu eró. praise to my God while I
have my being.

³⁴ Jucúndum sit ei eló- May my speech be accept-
quium meum: * ego læ- able to him: I will be glad
tābor in Dómino. in the Lord.

³⁵ Tollántur peccatóres de May sinners be wiped out
terra, et ímpii ne sint of the earth, and the wick-
ultra; * bēnedic, ánima ed so that they shall be no
mea, Dómino! Allelúja. more; O my soul, bless thou
the Lord! Alleluia.

Commentary.

This psalm (Davidic according to the title) first extols the
majesty of the Lord as revealed in nature. Verse 4 in the
Hebrew means: "Thou makest the winds thy messengers etc.;"
St. Paul, however, (Hebrews 1, 7) follows the Greek: "Who
makes his angels as the winds" (in swiftness?), "his ministers
as the flaming fire" (in awfulness and swiftness?)
260 5-18: Then in highly poetic language the psalmist describes

the creation of the earth and the providential gift of fountains and streams and rain to provide life for beast and bird, and grain, wine and oil for man. Forests and mountain crags are all made as dwellings for the diverse animals. Psalm 104

19-23: Through the sun, moon and stars God regulates the activity of his creatures.

24-26: The sea, with its wonders, is a marvel of God's creation.

27-30: All creatures depend on the Lord's bounty for their existence.

31-35: To this bountiful Lord of creation the psalmist promises lifelong praise. Let sinners vanish from his earth, but the psalmist will bless the Lord.

Reflection

The abundance of God's graces should overwhelm us with the thought of our unworthiness.

PSALM 104

Promises Fulfilled

In Appreciation of the Goodness of Divine Providence

God's gracious guidance of Israel. It testifies to the loving-kindness and justice of God towards his people. He has shown himself ever faithful to the promises made to Abraham.

A summons to praise God for his great deeds:

Celebráte Dóminum, acclamáte nómini ejus, **G**ive praise to the Lord, acclaim his name,
* nota fácite inter gentes, make known his deeds
tes ópera ejus. among the heathen.

Cantáte ei, psállite ei, * Sing to him, make melody
enarráte ómnia mirábí- to him, relate all his won-
lia ejus. drous works.

Gloriámmini de nómine Glory in his holy name;
sancto ejus; * lætétur let the heart of them rejoice
cor quæréntium Dómi- that seek the Lord.
num.

Consideráte Dóminum Consider the Lord and his
et poténtiam ejus, * quæ- might, seek his face ever-
rite fácies ejus semper. more.

Mementóte mirábília Remember his marvelous
ejus quæ fecit, * prodí- works which he has done, 261

- Psalm* 104 *gia ejus, et judícia oris ejus,* his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth,
 104 *Semen Abraham, servi ejus, * fílii Jacob, elécti ejus!* Ye seed of Abraham, his servant, ye sons of Jacob, his chosen ones!
 7 *Ipse Dóminus est Deus noster; * in univérsa terra valent judícia ejus.—* The Lord himself is our God; his judgments prevail in all the earth.

Fidelity of God to his promises:

- 8 *Memor est in ætérnum fœderis sui, * promíssi quod dispósuit in mille generatiónes,* He remembers his covenant forever, the promise which he made unto a thousand generations,
 9 *Fœderis quod íniit cum Abraham, * et juris jurándi quod dedit Isaac,* The covenant which he entered into with Abraham, and the oath which he made to Isaac,
 10 *Quod státuit pro Jacob firmum decretum, * pro Israël fœdus ætérnum,* Which he confirmed as a statute for Jacob, an everlasting covenant for Israel,
 11 *Dicens: Tibi dabo terram Chánaan * in sortem hereditáriam vestram.—* Saying: To thee will I give the land of Chanaan for the lot of your inheritance.

God's care of his chosen ones in their migrations:

- 12 *Cum essent número pauci, * exígui et peregríni in terra illa,* When they were but a small number, very few and strangers in that land,
 13 *Et migrárent de gente in gentem, * et de regno hoc ad pópulum illum,* And were going from nation to nation, and from this kingdom to that people,
 14 *Némini permísit opprímere eos, * et propter eos corripuit reges:* He suffered no one to oppress them, and for their sake he rebuked kings:
 15 *Nolíte tángere unctos meos, * nec prophétis meis intuléritis malum.”* “Touch not my anointed, and bring no evil to my prophets.”

Et vocávit famem super terram; * et omne subsidium panis subtráxit.

Miserat ante eos virum; * in servitútem venúndatus erat Joseph.

Strínxerant vínculis pedes ejus, * ferro ligátum erat collum ejus,

Donec impléta est prædictio ejus, * verbum Dómini comprobávit eum.

Misit rex, et solvit eum, * princeps populórum, et liberávit eum.

Constituit eum dóminum super domum suam, * et principem super omnem possessióem suam,

Ut erudíret próceres ejus pro beneplácito suo * et senes ejus sapiéntiam docéret.—

Tum Israël intrávit in Ægýptum, * et Jacob hospes fuit in terra Cham.

Et multiplicávit pópulum suum valde, * et fecit eum fortiórem inimicis ejus.—

And he called a famine upon the land; and he took away all the provision of bread.

He had sent a man before them; Joseph had been sold into slavery.

They had bound his feet with fetters, his neck had been encircled with iron,

Until his prophecy was fulfilled, until the word of the Lord approved him.

The king sent and loosed him; the ruler of the peoples, and set him free.

He made him master over his house, and ruler over all his possession,

That he might instruct his princes as he pleased, and teach his ancients wisdom.

Then Israel went into Egypt, and Jacob was a sojourner in the land of Cham.

And he multiplied his people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies.

Psalm
104

His care as shown in the plagues of Egypt:

Convértit cor eórum, ut ódio habérent pópulum ejus * et dolóse ágerent in servos ejus:

He turned their heart, to hate his people and to deal deceitfully with his servants:

Psalms

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Tum misit Móysen, servum suum, * Aaron, quem elégerat. Then he sent Moses, his servant, Aaron, whom he had chosen.

27 Patravérunt inter eos signa ejus, * et prodígia in terra Cham. They wrought his signs among them, and his wonders in the land of Cham.

28 Misit ténebras, et facta est calígo, * sed restitérunt verbis ejus. He sent darkness, and it was very dark, but they resisted his words.

29 Convértit aquas eórum in sánguinem, * et occídít pisces eórum. He turned their waters into blood, and destroyed their fish.

30 Scátuit terra eórum ranis, * usque in penetrália regum eórum. Their land swarmed with frogs, even unto the inner chambers of their kings.

31 Dixit, et venit agmen muscárum, * cúlices in omnes fines eórum. He spoke, and there came a swarm of flies, and gnats into all their borders.

32 Dedit eis pro plúvia grándinem, * ignem flammántem per terram eórum. He gave them hail for rain, flaming fire throughout their land.

33 Et percússit vites eórum et ficus eórum, * et confrégít árbores in finibus eórum. And he destroyed their vines and their fig-trees, and broke in pieces the trees within their borders.

34 Dixit, et venérunt locústæ, * et bruchi sine número; He spoke, and locusts came, and cankerworms innumerable;

35 Et devoravérunt omnem herbam in terra eórum, * et devoravérunt fructus agri eórum. And they devoured all the herbage in their land, and devoured the fruits of their ground.

36 Et percússit omnes primogénitos in terra eórum, * primitias omnis róboris eórum. And he slew all the first-born in their land, the first-fruits of all their strength.

264 Et edúxit eos cum génto et auro, * nec fuit Et he brought them out with silver and gold, and

in tribubus eórum infirmus. there was not among their tribes one that was feeble. *Psalm*
 Lætáti sunt Ægýptii de The Egyptians were glad **104**
 profectione eórum, * when they departed, for
 quia timor eórum ceciderat super illos.— fear of them had fallen upon them.

The Exodus, and the settlement in Canaan:

Expándit nubem in teguméntum, * et ignem, covering, and fire, to give
 ut lucéret per noctem. light in the night.
 Petiérunt, et addúxit They asked, and he
 coturnices, * et pane brought quail, and he
 cæli saturávit eos. filled them with bread of heaven.

Scidit petram, et mánavit aqua, * cucúrrit in water gushed forth, it
 déserto ut flumen. flowed in the desert like a river.

Nam memor fuit verbi sancti sui, * quod déderat Abrahæ, servo suo. For he was mindful of his holy word, which he had spoken to Abraham, his servant.

Et edúxit pópulum suum cum gáudio, * cum exsultatióne eléctos suos. And he brought forth his people with joy, his chosen ones with gladness.

Et dedit eis terras nationum, * et ópibus populórum potíti sunt, And he gave them the lands of the heathen, and they took the riches of the peoples in possession,

Ut custódiant præcépta ejus, * et leges ejus observent. Allelúja. That they might keep his statutes, and obey his laws. Alleluia.

Commentary

Verses 1-15 of this psalm are found in 1 Paral. 16, 8-22, and are there said to have been composed by David when the Ark of the Covenant was translated to Mount Sion. Israel is invited to praise the Lord for all he has done for their forefathers.

8-15: The Lord never forgot the covenant he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when they were still a small and

Psalm
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wandering family—a covenant that promised that Canaan would one day be theirs, and assured constant protection.

16-22: True to his covenant, in time of famine he brought the family of Jacob to safety in Egypt through the providential instrumentality of Joseph.

23-45: And again when the Egyptians later persecuted the now numerous descendants of Jacob, he punished the persecutors with the plagues; and he sent Moses to lead them, with his miraculous aid, through the desert into Canaan—there to become the nation of God.

Reflection

As St. Bonaventure says, there are three ways in which we should open our mouth in honoring God: by singing his praise, by acknowledging our faults, and by edifying our neighbor.

PSALM 105

Israel's Ingratitude

For Those Inclined to Forget

Ingratitude of Israel towards God. In all her history she has repeatedly rebelled against God stubbornly refusing to put her trust in him; therefore is she chastised by him.

A call to praise God:

¹ Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Celebráte Dóminum, **G**ive praise to the Lord.
quia bonus est,* quia for he is good, for his
in ætérnum misericórdia ejus. mercy endures forever.

² Quis eloquétur ópera Who shall declare the
poténtiæ Dómini,* enar- works of the Lord's power,
rábit omnes laudes ejus? who shall relate all his
praises?

³ Beáti qui obsérvant Blessed are they that keep
præcépta,* fáciunt, the statutes, that do at all
quod justum est, omni times what is just!
tépore!

⁴ Meménto mei, Dómine, Remember me, O Lord, in
pro benevoléntia in pó- thy kindness towards thy
pulum tuum; * visita people; visit me with thy
me auxílio tuo, help,

266 Ut delécter felicitáte That I may take delight in

electórum tuórum, ut the happiness of thy chosen *Psalm*
 gaudeam de gáudio pó- ones, that I may rejoice in
 puli tui, * ut glórier cum the joy of thy people, that
 hereditáte tua.— I may glory with thy in- **105**
 heritance.

Unbelief and murmuring at the Red Sea:

Peccávimus sicut pa- Like our fathers, we have
 tres nostri, * iniquitá- sinned, we have committed
 tem fécimus, ímpie égi- iniquity, we have acted
 mus. wickedly.

Patres nostri in Ægýp- Our fathers in Egypt did
 to * non consideravér- not consider thy wonders,
 runt mirabilia tua,

Non fuérunt mémores They remembered not the
 multitudinis gratiárum multitude of thy graces,
 tuárum, * sed rebellá- but rebelled against the
 runt contra Altíssimum Most High at the Red Sea.
 ad Mare Rubrum.

Sed salvávit eos prop- But he saved them for his
 ter nomen suum, * ut name's sake, that he might
 manifestáret poténtiam show forth his power.
 suam.

Et increpuit Mare Ru- And he rebuked the Red
 brum et exsiccátum est, Sea and it was dried up,
 * et duxit eos per fluctus and he led them through
 velut per desértum. the waves as through a
 wilderness.

Et salvávit eos de manu And he saved them from
 osóris, * et liberávit eos the hand of them that
 de manu inimíci. hated them, and delivered
 them from the hand of the
 enemy.

Et aquæ operuérunt And the waters covered
 adversários eórum: * ne their enemies: not even one
 unus quidem ex eis re- of them was left.
 mánsit.

Et credidérunt verbis And they believed his
 ejus, * et cantavérunt words, and sang his praises.
 laudes ejus.—

Psalm

Murmuring for flesh:

105

Cito obliti sunt ópera ejus: * non sunt confisi consilio ejus. They quickly forgot his works: they did not rely upon his counsel.

14 Et indulserunt concupiscéntiæ in desérto, * et tentavérunt Deum in solitúdine. And they gave themselves up to craving in the desert and tempted God in the wilderness.

15 Et concéssit eis petitió-nem eórum, * sed tabem immisit eis.— And he granted their request, but sent a wasting sickness upon them.

Jealousy of the authority of Moses and Aaron:

16 Et invidérunt Móysi in castris, * Aaron, sancto Dómini. And they were envious of Moses in the camp. of Aaron, the holy one of the Lord.

17 Apérta est terra et degluttívit Dathan, * et opéruit catervam Abíron. The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the clan of Abiron.

18 Et exársit ignis in catervameórum: * flamma combússit iníquos. And fire was kindled in their clan: the flame burned up the wicked.

Worship of the calf:

19 Fecérunt vítulum in Horeb, * et adoravérunt idólum ex auro fusum. They made a calf in Horeb, and adored the idol of molten gold.

20 Et commutavérunt glóriam suam * cum effigie tauri comedéntis fænum. And they changed their glory into the likeness of a bull that eats grass.

21 Obliti sunt Dei, qui salvávit eos, * qui fecit porténta in Ægýpto, They forgot God, who saved them, who wrought prodigies in Egypt.

22 Mirabilia in terra Cham, * stupénda ad Mare Rubrum. Wonders in the land of Cham, terrible things at the Red Sea.

Et cogitabat dispérdere eos, * nisi Móyses, eléctus ejus, And he was minded to destroy them, had not Moses, his chosen one, *Psalm* **105**

Intercessisset apud eum, * ut avérteret iram ejus, ne dispéderet eos.— Interceded with him to turn away his wrath, and not destroy them.

Unbelief on the return of the spies:

Et spreverunt terram desiderabilem; * non crediderunt verbo ejus. And they scorned the desirable land; they believed not his word.

Et murmuraverunt in tabernaculis suis, * non obœdiérunt Dómino. And they murmured in their tents, they hearkened not to the Lord.

Et erecta manu jurávit eis * se prostráturum eos in deserto, And with uplifted hand he swore to them that he would smite them in the desert,

Et dispersúrum semen eórum inter nátiónes, * et dissipatúrum eos per terras.— And scatter their seed among the nations, and scatter them in the lands.

Worship of Moabite gods:

Et adhæserunt Beelphegor, * et comederunt sacrificia deórum mortuórum. And they cleaved to Beelphegor, and they ate the sacrifices of dead gods.

Et provocaverunt eum facinóribus suis, * et irrui in eos plaga. And they provoked him with their evil deeds, and plague came upon them.

Sed surrexit Phinees et judicávit, * et plaga cessávit. But Phinees rose up and executed judgment, and the plague ceased.

Et imputátum est ei in méritum * in omnes generatiónes usque in ætérnum.— And it was counted unto him for merit among all generations for evermore.

Psalm

Murmuring at Meribah:

105

Et irritavérunt eum ad Aquas Meriba, * et male evenit Móysi propter eos, because of them,

- 33 Quia exacerbavérunt spíritum ejus, * et inconsulte locútus est lábiis suis. For they embittered his spirit, and he spoke rashly with his lips.

Idolatry in Canaan, but God saved them:

- 34 Non disperdidérunt gentes, * quas Dóminus jússet eos. They did not destroy the heathen, concerning whom the Lord had commanded them.

- 35 Et commiscuérunt se géntibus, * et didicérunt ópera eórum; And they mingled with the heathen, and learned their works;

- 36 Et coluérunt sculptília eórum, * quæ láqueus facta sunt eis. And they worshiped their idols, which became a snare to them.

- 37 Et immolavérunt fílios suos * et filias suas dæmóniis. And they sacrificed their sons and daughters to devils.

- 38 Et effudérunt ságuinem innocéntem: ságuinem filiórum filiarúmque suárum, * quos immolavérunt sculptílibus Chánaan. And they shed innocent blood: the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Chanaan.

Et terra pollúta est ságuine, 39 et contamináti sunt opéribus suis, * et fornicáti sunt facinóribus suis.— And the land was polluted with blood, and they were defiled by their works, and they were adulterous in their evil doings.

- 40 Et exársit furor Dómini in pópulum suum, * et abominátus est hereditátem suam. And the wrath of the Lord was enkindled against his people, and he abhorred his inheritance.

270 Et trádidit eos in ma And he delivered them

nus gentium, * et dominati sunt in eos, qui oderant eos. into the hands of the heathen, and they that hated them, had dominion over them. *Psalm* **105**

2 Et tribulaverunt eos inimici eorum, * et oppressi sunt sub manu eorum. And their enemies afflicted them, and they were overwhelmed beneath their hand.

3 Sæpenúmero liberavit eos; ipsi autem exacerbaverunt eum consiliis suis, * et prostrati sunt ob iniquitates suas. Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsels, and they were brought low because of their iniquities.

4 Sed respexit tribulationem eorum, * cum audisset orationem eorum. But he had regard for their distress, when he heard their prayer.

5 Et recordatus est in gratiam eorum fœderis sui, * et pœnituit eum propter multam misericordiam suam. And for their sake he remembered his covenant, and repented by reason of his great mercy.

6 Et misericordiam conciliavit eis * apud omnes qui captivos duxerant eos.— And he won mercy for them with all who had led them captive.

A prayer for restoration:

17 Salvos nos fac, Dómine, Deus noster, * et congrega nos de nationibus, Save us, O Lord, our God, and gather us together among the nations,

Ut celebrémus nomen sanctum tuum, * et gloriémur de laude tua. That we may praise thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.

8 Benedíctus Dóminus, Deus Israël, a sæculo in sæculum: * et omnis pópulus dicat: amen! Allelúja! Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel from everlasting unto everlasting: and let all the people say: Amen! Alleluia!

Psalm

Commentary

106 **T**his psalm, like the preceding, treats of Israel's history: here, however, Israel's infidelity is contrasted with the Lord's fidelity. The psalm begins by calling on all to praise the Lord for his goodness so often and marvelously shown to Israel. The people are exhorted to fidelity; and the Lord is asked to bless the nation.

6-33: He confesses that the people have sinned as their fathers did, enumerating the repeated infidelities with which they repaid the favors shown by the Lord in the Exodus.

34-46: Even after entering Canaan they fell into the idolatries of their neighbors, and the Lord in punishment let their neighbors oppress them. But he eventually saved them, always mercifully remembering his covenant with them.

47-48: So he asks now that Israel may return from its present exile, that she may praise and bless the Lord forever. The last verse is a doxology marking the end of the fourth Book of the psalms.

Reflection

We must always keep in mind the day of Judgment according to the words of Ecclesiasticus: "Before judgment examine thyself, and thou shalt find mercy in the sight of God" (18, 20).

PSALM 106

Return from Exile

For Meditation on God's Infinite Mercies

Thanksgiving to God, who has returned Israel from exile. It describes her deliverance from the various evils of her captivity and the blessings of God on her return. The wise man will meditate on God's deeds.

An exhortation to praise God:

1 **C**elebráte Dóminum, **G**ive praise to the Lord
quóniam bonus, * for he is good, for his
quóniam in ætérnum mercy endures forever.
misericórdia ejus.

2 Sic dicant qui redémpsi Thus let those speak who
sunt a Dómino, * quos have been redeemed by the
redémit de manu ini- Lord, whom he redeemed
mici, from the hand of the
enemy.

272 Quosque congregávit ex And whom he gathered

terris, ex oriēte et oc- out from the lands, from *Psalms*
casu, * ex aquilōne et the east and the west, from
austro.— the north and the south. **106**

God saved travelers in the desert:

Erravérunt in desérto, They wandered in the
solitúdine, * viam ad desert, in the wilderness;
civitátem habitábilem they found no way to a city
non invenérunt. that could be dwelt in.

Esuriébant et sitiébant, They hungered and thirst-
* vita eórum deficiébat ed, their life was failing
in ipsis. within them.

Et clamavérunt ad Dó- And they cried to the
minum in angústiiis suis; Lord in their distress; he
* a tribulatióibus eó- rescued them from their
rum erípuit eos. troubles.

Et duxit eos via recta, * And he led them by the
ut venírent in civitátem right way, that they might
habitábilem. come to a city that could
be dwelt in.

Grátias agant Dómino Let them give thanks to
pro misericórdia ejus, * the Lord for his mercy, and
et pro mirabilibus ejus for his wondrous deeds to-
erga filios hóminum, ward the children of men,

Quia satiávit ánimam For he has satisfied the
famélicam, * et ánimam famished soul, and filled
esuriéntem implévit bo- the hungry soul with good
nis.— things.

The liberation of captives:

Sedérunt in ténebris et They sat in darkness and
in obscúro, * ligáti mi- gloom, in bonds of misery
séria et ferro. and iron.

Nam rebelláverant con- For they had rebelled
tra elóquia Dei, * et against the words of God,
despéxerant consílium and they had despised the
Altissimi. counsel of the Most High.

Et humiliávit ærúmnis And he humbled their
cor córum, * vacillárun heart with labors, they
nec fuit qui subveníret. staggered and there was
none to help.

Psalm Et clamavérunt ad Dó- And they cried to the
106 minum in angústis suis; Lord in their distress; he
* a tribulatióibus eó- delivered them from their
rum liberávit eos. troubles.

14 Et edúxit eos e ténebris And he brought them out
et ex obscúro, * et vín- of darkness and gloom, and
cula eórum disrúpit. broke their bonds asunder

15 Grátias agant Dómino Let them give thanks to
pro misericórdia ejus, * the Lord for his mercy, and
et pro mirábilibus ejus for his wondrous deeds to-
erga filios hóminum. ward the children of men

16 Quod confrégit portas For he has broken gates
æreas * et vectes férreos of brass and burst iron
contrívit. bars.

The sick restored to health:

17 Ægrotábant propter They were sick because of
iniquitátem suam, * et their wickedness, and were
propter delícta sua affli- afflicted because of their
gebántur; offenses;

18 Omnem escam abomi- Their soul abhorred all
nabátur ánima eórum, food, and they drew near to
* et appropinquavérunt the gates of death.
ad portas mortis.

19 Et clamavérunt ad Dó- And they cried to the Lord
minum in angústis suis; in their distress; he de-
* a tribulatióibus eó- livered them from their
rum liberávit eos. troubles.

20 Misit verbum suum, ut He sent his word to heal
sanáret eos, * et ex in- them and to rescue them
térítu eríperet eos. from death.

21 Grátias agant Dómino Let them give thanks to
pro misericórdia ejus, * the Lord for his mercy, and
et pro mirábilibus ejus for his wondrous deeds to-
erga filios hóminum. ward the children of men.

22 Et sacrificent sacrificia And let them offer the sac-
laudis * et enárrent ópe- rifice of praise, and declare
274 ra ejus cum exsultatióne. his works with rejoicing.

The shipwrecked whom God has brought to harbor:

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Qui descénderant návi- They that had gone down
bus in mare, * merca- to the sea in ships, to ply
túram factúri in aquis their trade on the high seas,
magnis,

Hí vidérunt ópera Dó- These have seen the works
mini, * et mirabilia ejus of the Lord, and his won-
in pélagó. ders in the deep.

Dixit, et concitávit ven- He spoke, and called forth
tum procellósum, * qui a stormy wind, which
in altum éxtulit undas lifted the waves thereof
ejus. on high.

Ascendébant usque ad They mounted up to the
cælos, descendébant us- heavens, they went down
que ad ima; * ánima to the depths; their soul
eórum tabescébat in was wasting away amid
malis. evils.

Titubábant et nutábant They staggered and reeled
ut ébrii; * et absórpta like drunken men; and all
est omnis perítia eórum. their skill was swallowed
up.

Et clamavérunt ad Dó- And they cried to the Lord
minum in angústiis suis; in their distress, and he
* et e tribulatióibus brought them out of their
eórum edúxit eos. troubles.

Sedávit procéllam in He soothed the storm into
auram lenem, * et con- a gentle breeze, and the
tícuérunt fluctus maris. waves of the sea grew quiet.

Et lætáti sunt, quod si- And they rejoiced, be-
luérunt, * et dedúxit eos cause they were still, and
ad portum optátum. he brought them to the
haven where they fain
would be.

Grátias agant Dómino Let them give thanks to
pro misericórdia ejus, * the Lord for his mercy, and
et pro mirábilibus ejus for his wondrous deeds to-
erga filios hóminum. wards the children of men.

Et célebrént eum in And let them glorify him
cætu pópuli, * et in con- in the gathering of the peo-

Psalm
106

séssu seniórum laudent ple, and praise him in the
eum. session of the elders.

God's gracious providence in nature and history:

- 33 *Convértit flúmina in* He changed rivers into a
*desértum, * et fontes* desert, and fountains of
aquárum in terram siti- water into a thirsty land,
éntem,
- 34 *Terram frugíferam in* A fruitful land into a salt
*salsúginem, * propter* waste, because of the wick-
malitiam habitántium edness of them that dwell
in ea. therein.
- 35 *Convértit desértum in* He changed a desert into
*lacum aquárum, * et* a body of water, and a dry
terram áridam in fontes land into water-springs.
aquárum.
- 36 *Et collocávit illic esu-* And there he made the
*riéntes, * et condidérunt* hungry dwell, and they
civitátem habitábilem. founded a city to dwell in
- 37 *Et seminavérunt agros* And they sowed fields and
et plantavérunt vineas, planted vineyards, and ob-
** et obtinuérunt provén-* tained harvests of fruits.
tus frugum.
- 38 *Et benedíxit eis et mul-* And he blessed them, and
*tiplicáti sunt valde, * et* they were multiplied ex-
pécora non pauca trí- ceedingly, and cattle not a
buit eis. few he gave to them.
- 39 *Et pauci facti sunt et* And they became few and
*abjécti * ob pressúram* were brought low through
malórum et afflictiónis; the oppression of the
wicked and through sor-
row;
- 40 *Sed qui effúndit con-* But he that pours out con-
téptum super princi- tempt upon the prince,
*pes * eósque erráre facit* and causes them to wander
per ínvia desérta, through a pathless desert.
- 41 *Sublevávit egénium de* Raised the needy man out
*miséria, * et familias* of misery and made fami-
fecit numerósas ut gre- lies numerous as flocks.
ges.—

Vident recti et lætân- The just see and rejoice, *Psalm*
tur, * et omnis malitia and every evil shuts its
claudit os suum. mouth. **107**

Quis est sapiens, qui Who is wise, that gives
observet hæc, * et probe heed to these things, and
perpendat misericordias considers well the mercies
Dómini? of the Lord?

Commentary

This psalm continues the theme of the two previous psalms, being a hymn of praise of the Lord for bringing the people back from exile.

4-9: They were like travelers lost in the desert. They cried to the Lord, and he guided them to safety and fed them.

10-16: They were like imprisoned slaves, doomed to death. They cried to the Lord, and he set them free.

17-22: They were as men sick unto death. They cried to the Lord, and he sent them healing.

23-32: They were like sailors caught in a destructive storm. They cried to the Lord, and he calmed the storm and brought them to port.

33-43: The Lord has blessed their land with fertile abundance, caring for the poor and oppressed. So the just rejoice and the wicked are silenced; for the wise man sees in all this the goodness of the Lord.

Reflection

When our Lord appeared for the first time in Nazareth after the beginning of his public life, he gave the people the program of his divine ministry when he quoted from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because he has anointed me; to bring good news to the poor he has sent me, to proclaim to the captives release, and sight to the blind; to set at liberty the oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompense" (4, 18-19).

PSALM 107

Prayer in Battle

To Obtain the Grace of Fortitude

Prayer for victory over dangerous foes. The psalmist's confidence is firm, resting upon the great mercy and faithfulness of God, and on the promises made to his people.

Psalm

107

The title of the psalm:

Canticum. Psalmus. Davidis. A canticle. A psalm of David.

A promise of thanksgiving:

- 2 **F**irmum est cor meum, **M**y heart is steadfast, O
Deus, firmum cor God, my heart is stead-
meum; * cantábo et psal- fast; I will sing and make
lam. melody.
- 3 Evígila, ánima mea; evi- Awake, O my soul; awake
giláte, psaltérium et cí- psaltery and harp: I will
thara! excitábo auróram. arise at break of day.
- 4 Laudábo te in pópulis, I will praise thee, O Lord.
Dómine, * et psallam among the people, and I
tibi in natióibus, will sing unto thee among
the nations,
- 5 Quóniam magna est us- For thy mercy is great
que ad cælum misericór- even unto heaven, and thy
dia tua, * et usque ad faithfulness even unto the
nubes fidélitas tua. clouds.
- 6 Excélsus appáre super Show thyself, O God, high
cælos, Deus; * super above the heavens; let thy
omnem terram sit gló- glory be over all the earth
ria tua.
- 7 Ut liberéntur dilécti tui, That thy beloved ones
* ádjuva délixtera tua, et may be delivered, help with
exáudi nos.— thy right hand, and hear
us.

Complete victory:

- 8 Deus locútus est in san- God has spoken in his
ctuário suo: * “Exsul- sanctuary: “I will exult
tábo et partíbor Sichem, and I will divide Sichem,
et vallem Succoth dimé- and mete out the valley of
tiar; Succoth;
- 9 Mea est terra Gálaad, Mine is the land of Galaad,
et mea terra Manásse, * and mine the land of Ma-
et Ephraim gálea cápi- nasses; Ephraim is my hel-
tis mei, Juda sceptrum met, Juda my scepter.
meum,

278 Moab pelvis lotiónis Moab my wash-basin;

meā; super Edom po- over Edom I will cast my *Psalm*
nam calceamentum me- shoe, I will rejoice in vic- **108**
um, * de Philistaea tri- tory over Philistaea."
umphábo."—

Quis addúcet me in ci- Who will bring me into
tátem munitam? * quis the fortified city? Who will
dedúcet me usque in lead me right on to Edom?
Edom?

Nonne tu, Deus, qui Wilt not thou, O God,
reppulisti nos, * nec jam who has cast us off, and
egréderis, Deus, cum ex- wilt not thou, O God, go
ercitibus nostris? forth straightway with our
hosts?

Da nobis auxílium con- Grant us help against the
tra inimicum, * quia enemy, for vain is the aid
vanum est subsidium of men.
hóminum.

Per Deum fórtiter agé- Through God we shall do
mus, * et ipse conculcá- bravely, and he will tram-
bit inimícos nostros. ple on our foes.

Commentary

This psalm is a composite of parts of psalm 56 (verses 2-6 of this psalm are 8-12 in psalm 56) and psalm 59 (verses 7-14 are 6c-14 in psalm 59).

Reflection

Remember that God has given us not only angels and saints to help us in our trials, but a Mother, Mary.

PSALM 108

Christ's Enemies

For Those Who Suffer Ingratitude and Calumny

Prayer for help against merciless and treacherous foes. This psalm is a type of Christ and his enemies. The curses express divine punishments for the impenitent rather than a wish of the psalmist.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Davidis. For the choir-master. A psalm of David.

Psalm

An appeal for help:

108 **D**eus, laus mea, ne tacueris, * ² quia os **O** God, my praise, be not silent, for they have impium et dolosum contra me aperuerunt. opened a wicked and deceitful mouth against me.

Locúti sunt mecum lingua mendáci, et sermónibus ódii circumdederunt me, * et impugnauerunt me sine causa. They have spoken to me with a lying tongue, and have beset me with word of hatred, and have assailed me without cause.

⁴ Pro dilectione mea accusabant me: * ego vero orabam. In return for my love they reproached me, but I gave myself to prayer.

⁵ Et retribuérunt mihi mala pro bonis, * et ódium pro dilectione mea.— And they repaid me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

Due retribution upon the leader of his foes:

⁶ Súscita ímpium contra eum, * et accusátor stet a dextris ejus. Raise up the wicked man against him, and may the accuser stand at his right hand.

⁷ Cum judicábitur, éxeat condemnátus, * et deprecátio ejus írrita sit. When he is judged, may he go forth condemned, and may his prayer be to no effect.

⁸ Dies ejus fiant pauci, * munus ejus accípiat alter. May his days be few, and may another take his office.

⁹ Filii ejus órphani fiant, * et uxor ejus vídua. May his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

¹⁰ Instábiles vagéntur filii ejus et mendícent. * eiciántur e dómibus suis devastátis. May his children be vagabonds and beg, may they be cast out of their ruined homes.

¹¹ Fænerátor insidiétur omni possessióni ejus, * et aliéni dirípiant fructum labóris ejus. May the usurer lie in wait for all his substance, and may strangers plunder the fruit of his labor.

12 Nemo exhibeat ei misericórdiam, * nec sit qui misereátur pupillórum ejus. May no one show him mercy, and may there be none to pity his fatherless children.

13 Postéritas ejus tradá-tur excídio; * in generatíone áltera deleátur nomen eórum. May his offspring be given over to destruction; may their name be wiped out in the second generation.

14 Memorétur culpa patrum ejus apud Dóminum, * et peccátum matris ejus ne deleátur: May the wickedness of his fathers be remembered before the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out:

15 Præséntia sint Dómino semper, * et exstírpet e terra memóriam eórum. May they be always before the Lord, and may he root out their memory from the earth.

16 Neque enim cogitávit exercére misericórdiam, sed persecútus est hóminem míserum et ín-opem, * et afflictum corde, ut eum occíderet. For he did not think of showing mercy, but pursued the poor man and the needy, and the one troubled in heart, to put him to death.

17 Et diléxit maledictiónem: véniat ei; * nóluit benedictiónem: recédat ab eo. And he loved cursing: may it come upon him; he would not have blessings: be it far from him.

18 Et induátur maledictíone sicut vestiménto: intret, sicut aqua, in interióra ejus, * et, sicut óleum, in ossa ejus. And may he be clothed with cursing as with a garment: may it go into his vitals like water, and like oil into his bones.

19 Sit ei quasi vestis quæ óperit eum, * et zona qua cingitur semper. May it be unto him like a garment that covers him, and a girdle with which he is always girded.

A prayer for God's mercy:

20 Hæc merces sit eis a Dómino, qui me accú- May these wages come from the Lord upon them

- Psalm* 108 sant, * et qui loquúntur that accuse me, and that
mala advérsus ánimam speak evil things against
meam. my soul.
- 21 Sed tu, Dómine, Deus, But do thou, O Lord God.
age mecum propter no- deal with me for thy name's
men tuum; * quia bení- sake; because thy mercy is
gna est misericórdia tua, bounteous, save me.
salva me.
- 22 Nam ego sum miser et For I am poor and needy.
inops, * et cor meum and my heart is wounded
sauciátum est in me. within me.
- 23 Sicut umbra, quæ de- I vanish like a shadow
clínat, evanésco, * et ex- that is declining and I am
cútior ut locústa. shaken off like a locust.
- 24 Génua mea vacillant My knees tremble from
ob jejúnium, * et caro fasting, and my flesh
mea mácie tabéscit, wastes away with thinness.
- 25 Et ego factus sum op- And I am become a re-
próbrío illis; * vidéntes proach to them; seeing me,
me movent caput suum. they shake their head.

Further pleas for help:

- 26 Adjuva me, Dómine, Help me, O Lord, my God
Deus meus; * salva me save me according to thy
secúndum misericórdi- mercy.
am tuam.
- 27 Et sciant tuam hanc And let them know that
esse manum, * te, Dómi- this is thy hand, that thou,
ne, hæc fecísse. O Lord, hast done these
things.
- 28 Maledícant illi, sed tu Let them curse, but mayst
benedícas; insurgéntes thou bless; let them that
in me confundántur, * rise up against me be con-
servus autem tuus læ- founded, but may thy serv-
tétur. ant rejoice.
- 29 Induántur, qui accú- Let them that speak
sant me, ignominia, * et against me be clothed with
operiántur, sicut pállío, dishonor, and let them be
confusióné sua.— covered with their confu-
sion as with a mantle.

- to Celebrábo Dóminum I will give great glory to *Psalm*
ore meo valde, * et in the Lord with my mouth, **109**
médio multórum laudá- and in the midst of many
bo eum: I will praise him:
- 1 Nam ástitit a dextris For he has stood at the
páuperis, * ut a judici right hand of the poor man,
bus salvum fáceret eum. to save him from the
judges.

Commentary

This psalm is Davidic according to the title. But St. Peter quotes verse 8b (Acts 1, 20) of Judas' betrayal of our Lord; hence tradition has accepted the psalm as messianic. The psalmist appeals to the Lord against persecutors who return hatred for his love of them.

6-19: Then he prays that his persecutors be strictly tried and severely punished for their total lack of justice and mercy to the innocent and weak, and especially to the psalmist himself.

20-25: The psalmist then asks the Lord to look with mercy on his helpless suffering in the midst of mocking foes.

26-31: He expects the divine goodness to show the persecutors that he is with the psalmist. Then he will praise the Lord as the Saviour of the poor and persecuted.

Reflection

This psalm contains a prophecy of the betrayal of the innocent Saviour by Judas. May God grant that it not predict our betrayal of our Lord by our avarice!

PSALM 109

Christ's Dignities

Act of Submission to the Eucharistic King

The threefold office of the Messias as King, Priest and Judge. This psalm tells of the Divinity of Christ and the perpetual character of the Incarnation. It foretells Christ's final triumph over his enemies.

The Messias is a King:

- 1 Davidis. Psalmus.

A psalm of David.

Dixit Dóminus Dómi- **T**he Lord said to my Lord:
no meo; "Sede a dex- "Sit thou at my right
tris meis, * donec ponam hand, until I make thy

Psalm inimicos tuos scabellum enemies thy footstool.”
 109 pedum tuorum.”

Sceptrum poténtiæ tuæ The Lord will stretch
 protendet Dóminus ex forth the scepter of thy
 Sion: * “Domináre in power out of Sion: Rule
 médio inimicórum tuó- thou in the midst of thy
 rum! foes!

- 3 Tecum principátus die With thee is sovereignty
 ortus tui in splendóre on the day of thy birth in
 sanctitátis: * ante lucí- the radiance of holiness:
 ferum, tamquam rorem, like dew, before the day
 genui te.”— star, I begot thee.

The Messiah is a Priest:

- 4 Jurávit Dóminus et non The Lord has sworn, and
 pœnitébit eum: * “Tu he will not repent: “Thou
 es sacérdos in ætérnum art a priest forever accord-
 secúndum órđinem Mel- ing to the order of Mel-
 chísedech.”— chisedech.”

The Messiah as a Conqueror:

- 5 Dóminus a dextris tuis: The Lord is at thy right
 * cónteret die iræ suæ hand: he shall crush kings
 reges. on the day of his wrath.
 6 Judicábit natiónes, He shall judge the nations,
 acervábit cadáverá; * he shall heap up bodies; he
 cónteret cápita late per shall crush heads far and
 terram. wide through the land.
 7 De torrén-te in via bi- He shall drink of the tor-
 bet, * proptérea extóllet rent in the way, therefore
 caput. shall he lift up his head.

Commentary

284 **T**his psalm of David is clearly messianic according to the
 testimony of our Lord (Mt. 22, 41-45; Mark 12, 35; Luke
 20, 41-42), and of the Apostles (Acts 2, 32-36; 1 Cor. 15, 24-28;
 Hebrew 1, 5, 13; 5, 6ff; 6, 20; 7, 1ff; 8, 1; 10, 13;) David calls
 the Messiah his Lord and describes God enthroning the Mes-
 sias at his right hand to rule victoriously over all his enemies.
 Verse three is obscure in all versions. The Vulgate: “With
 thee shall be the royal authority in the day of thy triumph
 (literally, “strength”) amidst the splendor of the saints. From
 the womb before the daystar have I begotten thee.” The sense

of the Hebrew text as it stands: "Thy people come voluntarily to thee in the day of thy triumph in holy beauty" (either referring to the beauty of their personal sanctity, or to the beauty of their sacred—priestly—garments.) "Out of the womb of morning thy youth are to thee as dew," (referring to the number and beauty of the youthful followers of the King?). With a few emendations the Hebrew text gives the following sense: "With thee is the royal authority on the day of thy birth amidst holy splendor; before the daystar like dew I begot thee". In which version the holy and royal nature of the Messias is emphasized, as well as his mysterious birth ("like the dew").

Psalms
110

4: This King is established an eternal priest by solemn decree. His priesthood is the type of Melchisedech, who offered bread and wine.

5-7: He shall triumph with the Lord's help, executing victorious judgment on rebellious nations, so rapidly conquering them "that he shall pause only at wayside streams to slake his thirst" (so the apparent sense of verse 7. Some Fathers saw here a reference to the humiliation and exaltation of our Lord.)

Reflection

At the Last Supper our Lord ordained his apostles priests to carry on his sacerdotal ministry after his death. Pray that he may give the grace of a priestly vocation to countless others that there may be many laborers in his vineyard.

PSALM 110

God's Magnificence

Act of Thanksgiving after Holy Communion

Praise and thanksgiving to God for his benefits to the Israelites, especially on the occasion of their deliverance from Egypt. God's mighty works ought to be diligently meditated upon.

God's general benefits:

Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Celebrábo Dóminum **I** will praise the Lord with
toto corde, * in cœtu the whole heart, in the
justorum et congrega- gathering of the just and
tione. in the assembly of the peo-
ple.

Magna sunt ópera Dó- Great are the works of the 285

Psalm 110 mini, * scrutanda ómnibus qui díligunt ea. Lord, deserving to be examined by all who love them.

3 Majéstas et magnificéntia opus ejus; * et justítia ejus manet in ætérnum. His work is majesty and splendor: and his justice abides forever.

4 Memoránda fecit mirabília sua; * miséricors et clemens est Dóminus. He has made his wondrous works to be remembered: merciful and kind is the Lord.

God's particular benefits:

5 Escam dedit timéntibus se; * memor erit in ætérnum fœderis sui. He has given food to them that fear him; he will be mindful forever of his covenant.

6 Poténtiam óperum suórum manifestávit pópulo suo, * ut daret eis possessiónem géntium. He has shown forth the mightiness of his works to his people, that he may give them the possession of the heathen.

7 Opera mánuum ejus sunt fidélia et justa; * firma sunt ómnia præcépta ejus. Faithful and just are the works of his hands; trustworthy are all his precepts.

8 Stabílita in sæcula, in ætérnum, * facta cum firmitáte et æquitáte. Established for ever and ever, made with strength and justice.

9 Redemptiónem misit pópulo suo, státuit in ætérnum fœdus suum; * sanctum et venerábile est nomen ejus. He has sent redemption to his people, he has established his covenant forever: holy is his name and worthy of reverence.

10 Inítium sapiéntiæ timor Dómini: prudénter agunt omnes, qui colunt eum; * laus ejus manet in ætérnum. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: all who revere him act prudently; his praise abides for ever.

Commentary

Psalm

The psalmist sings, in the presence of the assembled people, his grateful praises of the Lord for his mighty works, majestic and just, wonderful and merciful.

111

5-10: He then enumerates the blessings that the Lord, faithful to his covenant, gives to his people: their food, their country, just laws, safety from enemies. So the wise man has come to revere him and praise him forever.

Reflection

Verse 5 tells us that "He hath given food to them that fear him." What food has God given us?

The Blessed Sacrament. It is not only Bread from heaven, but his own Body. At the feet of Jesus let us exclaim: "Thou hast made thyself a prisoner of love, dwelling in our midst in the tabernacle of the altar."

PSALM 111

Unceasing Praise

For Those Aspiring to True Riches

The happiness of the just man. The qualities that shall preserve him from evil are the fear of God, hope, kindness, mercy, justice, constancy and charity towards the poor.

The reverent man is blessed with prosperity:

Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Beátus vir qui timet Dóminum, * qui mandátis ejus delectátur multum.

Potens in terra erit semen ejus; * generatióni rectórum benedicétur.

Opes et divítiae erunt in domo ejus, * et magnificentia ejus manébit semper.

Blessed is the man that fears the Lord, that delights greatly in his commandments.

His seed shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Riches and wealth shall be in his house, and his munificence shall endure forever.

The happiness of the charitable man:

Oritur in ténebris ut To the upright he rises like 287

- Psalm* lumen rectis, * clemens a light in darkness, kind
 et miséricors et justus. and merciful and just.
 Bene est viro qui mise- It is well with the man
 rétur et cómodat,* qui that shows mercy and
 dispónit res suas cum lends, that orders his af-
 justítia. fairs with justice.
- 6 In ætérnum non vacil- He shall never waver; the
 lábit;* in memória ætér- just man shall be in ever-
 na erit justus. lasting remembrance.
- 7 A núntio tristi non ti- He shall not be afraid of
 mébit; * firmum est cor sad tidings; his heart is
 ejus, sperans in Dómino. steadfast, hoping in the
 Lord.
- 8 Constans est cor ejus, His heart is constant, he
 non timébit, * donec shall not fear; until he sees
 confúsos vídeat adversá- his enemies confounded.
 rios suos.
- 9 Distribuit, donat pau- He distributes, he gives to
 péribus, munificéntia the poor, his munificence
 ejus manébit semper; * shall endure forever; his
 cornu ejus extollétur horn shall be exalted with
 cum glória. glory.
- 10 Peccátor vidébit et in- The wicked shall see and
 dignábitur, déntibus su- shall be angry, he shall
 is frendet et tabéscet; * gnash his teeth and pine
 desidérium peccatórum away; the desire of the
 períbit. wicked shall perish.

Commentary

The psalmist here announces that the godfearing man is blessed by the Lord.

4-10: He describes the consoling goodness, generosity, and justice of the godfearing man towards the upright. Such a man is secure in the knowledge that the Lord will be his strength when evil threatens. He is certain of a just and glorious reward for his kind generosity to the poor. But the wicked will pine away in vain envy, for their desires will be frustrated.

Reflection

Let us model our lives on that of Jesus of Nazareth, who “went about doing good.” Our aim in life should not be the applause of men, but only that we please God.

PSALM 112

Psalm

Praise for the Just

112

For Remaining Steadfast in the Praise of God

A call to offer continual sacrifice of praise to God, who cares for the weak and lowly. Although he is the Most High God, yet he kindly condescends to come to the aid of the poor and the needy.

A call to praise the Lord:

Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Laudáte, servi Dómini,
* laudáte nomen Dó-
mini.

Praise, ye servants of the
Lord, praise ye the name
of the Lord.

Sit nomen Dómini be-
nedictum * et nunc et
usque in ætérnum.

Blessed be the name of the
Lord both now and forever.

A solis ortu usque ad
occásum ejus * laudétur
nomen Dómini.—

From the rising of the sun
unto its going down, may
the name of the Lord be
praised.

Why God should be praised:

Excélsus super omnes
gentes Dóminus, * super
cælos glória ejus.

The Lord is high above all
nations, his glory above the
heavens.

Quis sicut Dóminus,
Deus noster, qui sedet
in alto * „ et óculos de-
míttit in cælum et in
terram?—

Who is like the Lord, our
God, who dwells on high,
and casts his eyes down up-
on heaven and earth?

Súblevat a púlvere ín-
opem, * e stércore érigit
páuperem,

He raises up the needy
man out of the dust, he
lifts up the poor man out of
the dunghill,

Ut cólocet eum cum
príncipibus, * cum prin-
cípibus pópuli sui.

That he may place him
with princes, with the
princes of his people.

Habitáre facit eam, quæ
stérilis erat in domo, *
matrem filiórum lætán-
tem.

He makes her, who was
barren to dwell in a house,
the joyful mother of chil-
dren.

Psalm

Commentary

113

This psalm is the first of the Hallel (Psalms 112-117) sung by the Jews on the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. The psalmist calls upon the faithful to praise the Lord always and everywhere.

4-9: He enumerates reasons for praising the Lord: his glorious mastery over the universe; his constant exaltation of the lowly, the wretched, and barren (verses 7 and 8 are found in the Canticle of Anna, 1 Kings 2, 8; and 6-8 are echoed in the "Magnificat").

Reflection

God's claim to our praise is unceasing, for he has said: "Even to your old age I am the same, and to your gray hairs I will carry you: I have made you and I will bear: I will carry and will save" (Is. 46, 4).

PSALM 113

The True God

To Remain in Awe of God's Omnipotence

The miracles of the Exodus as splendid manifestations of God's omnipotence. Hence all idols should be put to scorn. God alone is deserving of praise, and in him only should men put their trust.

A

Miracles wrought by God when Israel went forth from Egypt:

¹ Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Cum exíret Israë! de Ægýpto, * domus Jacob de pópulo bárbaro, **W**hen Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarous people,

² Factus est Juda sanctuárium ejus, * Israë! arý, Israel his kingdom. regnum ejus.

³ Mare vidit et fugit, * The sea saw and fled, the Jordánis vertit se retrórsum. Jordan turned backward.

⁴ Montes saltárun! ut arietes, * colles ut agnelli. The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like little lambs.

Quid est tibi, mare, What ails thee, O sea.
290 quod fugis? * Jordánis, that thou fleest? O Jordan.

quod vertis te retrór- that thou turnest back? *Psalm*
sum?

Montes, quod saltátis O mountains, that you **113**
ut arietes, * colles, ut skip like rams, O hills, like
aguélli? little lambs?

A fácie Dómini contre- Tremble, O earth, at the
mísce, terra, * a fácie presence of the Lord, at the
Dei Jacob, presence of the God of
Jacob,

Qui convértit petram Who turned the rock into
in stagnum aquárum, * a pool of waters, the stony
rupem in fontes aquá- hill into fountains of
rum.— waters.

B

For Remaining Confident When Tempted

Contrast between our Lord and the gods of the heathens:

Non nobis, Dómine, **N**ot to us, O Lord, not to
non nobis, sed nó- us, but to thy name
mini tuo da glóriam, * give glory, for the sake of
propter misericórdiam thy mercy, and thy faith-
tuam, propter fidelitá- fulness.
tem tuam.

Quare dicant gentes: * Why should the heathen
“Ubinam est Deus eó- say: “Where is their God?”
rum?”

Deus noster in cælo est; Our God is in heaven; he
* ómnia, quæ vóluit, fe- has done all things what-
cit.— soever he would.

Idóla eórum sunt ar- Their idols are silver and
géntum et aurum, * opus gold, the work of the hands
mánuum hómínium. of men.

Os habent, et non lo- They have mouths, and
quúntur; * óculos ha- speak not; they have eyes
bent, et non vident. and see not.

Aures habent, et non They have ears, and hear
áudiunt; * nares habent, not; they have noses, and
et non odorántur. smell not.

Manus habent, et non They have hands, and feel
palpant; pedes habent, et not; they have feet, and

Psalm
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non ámbulant; * sonum walk not; neither do they
non edunt gútture suo. utter a sound with their
throat.

- 8 Similes illis erunt, qui Like unto them shall be
fáciunt ea, * omnis qui they that make them,
confídít in eis.— everyone that trusts in
them.

Trust in the Lord:

- 9 Domus Israë́l confídít The house of Israel trusts
in Dómino: * adjútor in the Lord: he is their
eórum et clipeus eórum helper and their shield.
est.
10 Domus Aaron confídít The house of Aaron trusts
in Dómino: * adjútor in the Lord: he is their
eórum et clipeus eórum helper and their shield.
est.
11 Qui timent Dóminum, They that fear the Lord
confídunt in Dómino: * trust in the Lord: he
adjútor eórum et clipeus their helper and their
eórum est. shield.
12 Dóminus recordá'tur no- The Lord remembers us
stri * et benedícet nobis; and will bless us;
Benedícet dómui Israë́l. He will bless the house of
* benedícet dómui Aaron. Israel, he will bless the
house of Aaron.
13 Benedícet iis qui timent He will bless them that
Dóminum, * tam pusí- fear the Lord, both little
lis quam majóribus. and great.

Praise to the Lord:

- 14 Dóminus multiplicábit The Lord will grant you
vos, * vos et filios ve- increase, you and your
stros. children.
15 Benedícti vos a Dómi- Blessed be ye by the Lord,
no, * qui fecit cælum et who made heaven and
terram. earth.
16 Cælum est cælum Dó- Heaven is the heaven of
mini, * terram autem the Lord, but the earth he
dedit filiis hóminum. has given to the children of
men.

Non mórtui laudant The dead do not praise the *Psalm*
Dóminum, * neque ullus Lord, nor anyone that goes **114**
qui ad inferos descéndit. down to the grave.

Sed nos benedicimus But we bless the Lord,
Dómino, * et nunc et both now and forever.
usque in ætérnum.

Commentary

This psalm begins with a highly poetic description of the wonders that took place during Israel's exodus from Egypt to Canaan—the presence of the Lord made the waters flee and mountains leap like animals. He turned rocks into fountains. What follows is really a separate psalm (115 in the Hebrew).

1-8: To the Lord alone and to his goodness and fidelity does the glory for these wonders belong. He is master, not the helpless idols of the heathen. May the idolaters become (helpless) like their idols.

9-13: But Israel, trusting and revering the Lord, is sure of his protection.

14-18: He concludes with a prayer for the blessing of prosperity in this life on the people of his nation, for the Lord has given the earth to men, and the living alone praise the Lord.

Reflection

Just as God performed many miracles for the Jews to hasten their entrance into the Promised Land, so does he aid us by his manifold graces on our journey towards heaven.

PSALM 114

Saved from Death

For One Whose Life Has Been Spared

Thanksgiving for help in great danger. The prayer of one who is near death; God who watches over him, has come to his rescue and has saved his life.

Gratitude for answered prayer:

Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Díligo Dóminum: quia **I** love the Lord: because
audivit * vocem ob- he has heard the voice
secratiónis meæ, of my pleading,

Quia inclinávit aurem Because he inclined his
suam mihi, * quo die ear unto me, in the day
invocávi eum. that I called upon him.

Psalm

114

A prayer in peril:

- Circumdederunt me funes mortis, et láquei inferórum supervenérunt mihi, * in angórem et ærúmnas incidi. The bands of death encompassed me, and the snares of Sheol came upon me, and I fell into torment and troubles.
- 4 Et nomen Dómini invocávi: * “O, Dómine, salva vitam meam!”— And I called upon the name of the Lord: “O Lord, save my life!”

Experience of God's mercy:

- 5 Benígnus est Dóminus et justus, * et Deus noster miséricors. The Lord is gracious and just, and our God is merciful.
- 6 Custódit simplices Dóminus: * miser fui et salvávit me. The Lord watches over the simple ones: I was wretched, and he saved me.
- 7 Redi, ánima mea, ad tranquillitátem tuam, * quia Dóminus bene fecit tibi. Return, O my soul, unto thy peace, for the Lord has done well for thee.
- 8 Etenim erípuit ánimam meam a morte, * óculos meos a lácrimis, pedes meos a lapsu. For he has rescued my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling.
- 9 Ambulábo coram Dómino * in regióne vivéntium. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

Commentary

The psalmist makes a prayer of love of the Lord, because he has heard his prayer and saved him from death.

5-9: He praises the Lord for his mercy to the lowly; and recalling what the Lord has done for him, he resolves ever to live according to the Lord's will.

Reflection

Among the many beautiful titles by which we invoke our Blessed Mother in her Litany is that of “Refuge of Sinners.” Remember that when she stood by the cross of her dying Son she pleaded for the salvation of the penitent thief, and through him for all sinners.

PSALM 115
The Grateful Man

Psalm
115

For Those Who Have Made Vows to God

Thanksgiving for help in great danger. The psalmist has learned to put his trust in God rather than in men. He resolves to repay the Lord to the best of his ability.

Confidence in God with promise of sacrifices:

Confísus sum, étiam **I** trusted, even when I
cum dixi: * “Ego af- said: “I am greatly af-
flictus sum valde”; flicted”;
Ego dixi in pavóre I said in my fear: “Every
meo: * “Omnis homo man is deceitful.”
fallax!”

Quid retribuam Dómi- What shall I render to the
no * pro ómnibus quæ Lord for all the things he
tribuit mihi? has given me?

Cálicem salútis accípi- I will take the chalice of
am, * et nomen Dómini salvation, and I will call
invocábo. upon the name of the Lord.

Vota mea Dómino red- I will pay my vows to the
dam * coram omni pó- Lord before all his people.
pulo ejus.

A promise of thanksgiving in the Temple:

Pretiósá est in óculis Precious in the eyes of the
Dómini * mors sanctó- Lord is the death of his
rum ejus. saints.

O Dómine, ego servus O Lord, I am thy servant,
tuus sum, ego servus tu- I am thy servant, the son of
us, filius ancíllæ tuæ: * thy handmaid: thou hast
solvísti víncula mea. loosed my bonds.

Tibi sacrificábo sacrifici- I will sacrifice to thee the
um laudis, * et nomen sacrifice of praise, and I
Dómini invocábo. will call upon the name of
the Lord.

Vota mea Dómino red- I will pay my vows to the
dam * coram omni pó- Lord before all his people,
pulo ejus,

In átriis domus Dómi- In the courts of the house 295

Psalm ni, * in médio tui, Jerú- of the Lord, in the midst o
116 salem. thee, O Jerusalem.

Commentary

The psalmist continued to believe (in the Lord) even when he spoke (so the Hebrew; the Greek and 2 Cor. 4, 13: "believe; therefore I speak") of his afflictions and man's de ceits. So now, considering the return to be made for th Lord's benefits, he resolves to offer a public thanksgiving-sac rifice.

15-19: He praises the Lord for showing that he hold precious the death of his faithful ones by sparing his humbl servant. Again he resolves to offer a public thanksgiving-sacri fice in the Temple.

Reflection

If we should but reflect on the infinite value of th sacrifice of the Mass, not a day would pass with out our attending this supreme act of divine wor ship. Always remember the help we may give to th suffering souls in Purgatory by applying to them th fruits of the Mass.

PSALM 116

All Called to Praise

A Short Act of Praise

Invitation to all nations to praise God, because all have benefited from his goodness and faithfulness. Particularly in the New Law should the Gentiles thank God for his mercy.

Praise God for his goodness towards Israel:

1 Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Laudáte Dóminum, om- **O**h, praise the Lord, all y
nes gentes, * prædi- nations, glorify him, a
câte eum, omnes pópuli, ye people,

2 Quóniam confirmáta For his mercy is confirme
est super nos misericór- upon us, and the faithfu
dia ejus, * et fidélitas ness of the Lord remain
Dómini manet in ætér- forever.
num.

Commentary

296 **T**his brief psalm calling upon all nations to praise the Lo. for his goodness and everlasting fidelity is interpreted l

Paul (Romans 15, 11) as referring to God's mercy in bringing Christ's salvation to Gentile as well as to Jew.

Reflection

Psalm
117

When this hymn is sung after benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, let us fervently thank God for the heavenly gift that he has given us in the tabernacle of his love.

PSALM 117

The Joy of Salvation

A Solemn Act of Thanksgiving

A thanksgiving song at the Feast of Tabernacles. The heart of the psalmist overflows with joy in the Lord, who has been his Saviour so many times in response to prayer. In the future nothing will shake his confidence in the Lord.

A call to praise God for his goodness:

Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Grátias ágite Dómino, Give thanks to the Lord,
quia bonus est; * for he is good; for his
quia in ætérnum mise- mercy endures forever.
ricordia ejus.

Dicat domus Israël: * Let the house of Israel
In ætérnum misericór- say: "His mercy endures
dia ejus." forever."

Dicat domus Aaron: * Let the house of Aaron
In ætérnum misericór- say: "His mercy endures
dia ejus." forever."

Dicant qui timent Dó- Let them that fear the
minum: * "In ætérnum Lord say: "His mercy en-
misericórdia ejus."— dures forever."

Israel has trusted in God:

De tribulatióne invocá- In my trouble I called
vi Dóminum; * exaudivit upon the Lord; the Lord
me Dóminus et liberávit heard me and set me free.
me.

Dóminus mecum est: The Lord is with me: I
non timeo; * quid fáciat fear not; what can man do
mihi homo? to me?

Dóminus mecum est, The Lord is with me,
adjutor meus, * et ego my helper, and I shall 297

Psalms confusos vidébo inimí- see my foes confounded.
cos meos.

117

Mélius est confúgere ad Dóminum, * quam confidere in hómine. It is better to take refuge in the Lord, than to trust in man.

9 Mélius est confúgere ad Dóminum * quam confidere in princípibus.— It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes.

Through God's help Israel repelled its enemies:

10 Omnes gentes circumvenérunt me: * in nómine Dómini contrivi eos. All nations surrounded me: in the name of the Lord I shattered them.

11 Undique circumvenérunt me: * in nómine Dómini contrivi eos. On all sides they surrounded me: in the name of the Lord I shattered them.

12 Circumvenérunt me sicut apes; adussérunt, sicut ignis spinas: * in nómine Dómini contrivi eos. They surrounded me like bees; they raged, like a fire among thorns: in the name of the Lord I shattered them.

13 Pulsus, impúlsus sum, ut cáderem; * sed Dóminus adjúvit me. Being struck, I was pushed forward so that I might fall: but the Lord upheld me.

14 Robur meum et fortitúdo mea est Dóminus; * et factus est mihi salvátor.— The Lord is my strength and my courage; and he has become my saviour.

The rejoicings of Israel:

15 Vox exsultatiónis et salutis * in tabernáculis justórum: The voice of rejoicing and of salvation is in the tents of the just:

Déxtera Dómini fórtiter egít, ¹⁶ déxtera Dómini eréxit me, * déxtera Dómini fórtiter egít. The right hand of the Lord has done bravely, the right hand of the Lord has lifted me up, the right hand of the Lord has done bravely.

Non móriar, sed vivam; I shall not die, but live; *Psalm*
 * et enarrábo ópera Dó- and I shall declare the **117**
 mini. works of the Lord.
 Castigávit, castigávit He has chastised, the
 me Dóminus,* sed morti Lord has chastised me, but
 on trádedit me.— he has not delivered me
 over to death.

The rejoicings in the Temple:

Aperíte mihi portas ju- Open to me the gates of
 stitiæ: * ingressus per justice: I will go in through
 eas grátias agam Dó- them and give thanks to
 mino. the Lord.

Hæc est porta Dómini, This is the gate of the
 * justi intrábunt per Lord, the just shall enter
 eam. through it.

Grátias agam tibi, quod I will give thanks to thee,
 audisti me, * et factus because thou hast heard
 es mihi salvátor. me, and art become my
 saviour.

Lapis, quem reproba- The stone which the
 verunt ædificántes, * fa- builders rejected has be-
 ctus est caput ánguli. come the head of the cor-
 ner.

A Dómino factum est This is the Lord's doing; it
 etud; * est mirábile in is wonderful in our eyes.
 oculis nostris.

Hic est dies quem fecit This is the day which the
 Dóminus; * exsultémus, Lord has made; let us be
 et lætémur de eo. glad and rejoice at it.

O Dómine, salvum fac; O Lord, save; O Lord, give
 * o Dómine, da prospe- prosperity!
 rilátem!—

Praises and blessings:

Benedíctus qui venit in Blessed is he that comes
 nómine Dómini; bene- in the name of the Lord;
 dicimus vobis e domo we bless you out of the
 Dómini. * 27 Deus est Dó- house of the Lord. The Lord
 minus, et illúxit nobis. is God, and he has shone
 upon us.

- Psalm*
117 Ordináte pompam cum Appoint a solemn proces-
fróndibus densis * usque sion with shady boughs
ad córnua altáris. even to the horns of the
altar.
28 Deus meus es tu, et Thou art my God, and I
grátias ago tibi; * Deus give thanks to thee; my
meus, láudibus te ex- God, with praises I extol
tólo. thee.
29 Grátias ágite Dómino, Give thanks to the Lord,
quia bonus est; * in ætér- for he is good; his mercy
num misericórdia ejus. endures forever.

Commentary

This psalm seems to be a hymn sung in processions to the Temple, probably on the Feast of Tabernacles. Israel is called upon to join in praise of the Lord for his eternal goodness.

5-9: The whole people then praise the Lord who ever shows himself a Saviour more worthy of trust than worldly princes.

10-14: They recall how often the Lord has been their salvation in the face of overwhelming foes.

15-18: They repeat exultingly that the Lord ever saves them. Though he punishes them he never allows them to perish.

19-20: Arrived at the Temple gates they command them to open and are told that only the just may enter.

21-27: The people, now in the Temple, praise the Lord for having taken them, "the rejected stone, and made them his cornerstone" (so verse 22: here Israel is a type of the Messiah. Our Lord uses this text of himself on Palm Sunday: cf. Mt. 21, 42ff.; Mark 12, 10-11; Luke 20, 17; cf. also Acts 4, 11; Eph. 2, 20f.; 1 Peter 2, 7; Mt. 21, 9; John 12, 13). The realization of this makes the festival a day of rejoicing. The people then obtain the blessing of the priest and go in procession around the altar (verse 27b is obscure; we follow one possible sense. "Form the festal march with leafy branches up to the horns of the altar.")

28-29: The hymn ends with loving praise of the Lord's eternal goodness (cf. verse 1).

Reflection

If we trust in God, we need have no fear of men or of what they may do to us. They may persecute us, but they can inflict no lasting evil upon us.

PSALM 118

On the Law of God

Psalm
118

For All Who Are Tempted to Forget God

Praise of God's Law as a norm of right living. The psalmist repeatedly returns to this one theme: I shall fulfill the will of God with fidelity and constancy.

ALEPH

God's Law, source of happiness, must be learned:

Beāti quorum immaculāta est via, * qui āmbulant in lege Dómini.

Beāti qui obsēvant prāscripta ejus, * toto corde quāerunt eum,

qui non faciunt iniquitātem, * sed āmbulant in viis ejus.

Tu dedisti prācepta tua, * ut custodiāntur valde.

Utinam firmæ sint viæ meæ * ad custodiēda statūta tua!

Tunc non confūdar, * cum intēdero ad ómnia mandāta tua.

Celebrābo te in rectitudine cordis, * cum didicero decrēta justitiæ tuæ.

Statūta tua custodiā: ne dereliqueris me omnino.

Blessed are they whose way is undefiled, who walk in the law of the Lord.

Blessed are they that keep his precepts, that seek him with their whole heart,

That do no wickedness, but walk in his ways.

Thou hast given thy decrees to be kept diligently.

Oh, that my ways may be fixed unto the keeping of thy laws!

Then I shall not be confounded when I have respect unto all thy commands.

I will praise thee in sincerity of heart, when I have learned the ordinances of thy justice.

I will keep thy laws: do not thou utterly forsake me!

BETH

God's Law, a safeguard from sin:

Quómodo puram servābit adulēscens viam

How shall a young man keep his way pure? By

Psalm suam? * custodiéndo heeding thy words.

118 verba tua.

- Toto corde meo quæro With my whole heart I
te; * ne sínieris me aber- seek thee; suffer me not to
râre a mandâtis tuis. stray from thy commands.
11 In corde meo recondo Thy word I hide in my
elóquium tuum, * ne heart, that I may not sin
peccem contra te. against thee.
12 Benedíctus es, Dómine; Blessed art thou, O Lord,
* doce me statúta tua. teach me thy laws.
13 Lábiis meis enárro * With my lips I declare all
omnia decréta oris tui. the decrees of thy mouth.
14 De via præscriptórum I rejoice in the way of thy
tuórum lætor, * sicut de precepts, as in all riches.
omnia divítiis.
15 De præcéptis tuis me- I will meditate on thy de-
ditábor, * et considerábo crees, and I will consider
vias tuas. thy ways.
16 Statútis tuis delectá- I will delight in thy laws.
bor: * non oblivíscar I will not forget thy words.
verba tua.

GHIMEL

God's Law, a comfort in persecution:

- 17 Bene fac servo tuo, ut Deal well with thy servant,
vivam * et custódiám that I may live and may
verba tua. keep thy words.
18 Aperi óculos meos, * ut Open my eyes, that I may
considerem mirábília le- consider the wonders of thy
gis tuæ. law.
19 Hospes ego sum in ter- I am a stranger on earth.
ra, * noli a me abscón- hide not from me thy com-
dere mandáta tua. mands.
20 Déficit ánima mea, * My soul grows faint, long-
desiderans decréta tua ing for thy ordinances at
omni témpore. all times.
21 Increpásti supérbos; * Thou hast rebuked the
maledícti qui declínant proud; accursed are they
a mandâtis tuis. that turn aside from thy
commands.

Aufer a me opprobrium et contéptum, * quia præscripta tua obsérvo.	Remove from me re- proach and contempt, be- cause I keep thy precepts.	<i>Psalm</i> 118
Etsi considunt princi- pes et contra me loquún- tur, * servus tuus medi- tatur de statútis tuis.	Although princes sit to- gether and speak against me, thy servant meditates on thy laws.	
Nam præscripta tua sunt deliciæ meæ, * con- siliári mei statúta tua.	For thy precepts are my delight, thy laws my coun- selors.	

DALETH

God's Law, a help in distress:

Prostráta est in púlvere anima mea: * redde mi- hi vitam secúndum ver- bum tuum.	My soul is prostrate in the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.
---	--

Vias meas expósui et exaudisti me: * doce me statúta tua.	I have declared my ways and thou hast heard me: teach me thy laws.
---	--

Via præceptórum tuó- rum institue me, * et meditabor mirabilia tua.	Instruct me in the way of thy decrees, and I will meditate on thy wondrous works.
---	--

Stillat lácrimas ánima mea ex mæroré: * érige me secúndum verbum tuum.	My soul sheds tears in sor- row: strengthen me ac- cording to thy word.
---	---

A via erróris arce me, * et legem tuam largíre mihi.	Keep me from the way of error, and impart thy law to me.
--	--

Viam veritátis elégi, * decréta tua propósui mihi.	I have chosen the way of truth, I have set thy ordi- nances before me.
--	--

Adhæréo præscríptis tuis: * Dómine, noli me confúndere.	I cleave to thy precepts: O Lord, put me not to shame.
---	---

Viam mandatórum tuó- rum curram, * cum di- latáveris cor meum.	I will run the way of thy commands, when thou hast enlarged my heart.
--	---

Psalm

HE

118

It helps to avoid sin:

- Ostende mihi Dómine, Show me the way of thy
viam statútórum tu- laws, O Lord, and I will
órum, * et servábo eam keep it perfectly.
ad amússim.
- 34 Instrue me, ut obsér- Instruct me, that I may
vem legem tuam, * et observe thy law, and may
custódiam illam toto keep it with all my heart.
corde meo.
- 35 Deduc me in sémita Lead me in the path of thy
mandatórum tuórum, * commands, for I delight
quia ipsa deléctor. therein.
- 36 Inclína cor meum in Incline my heart unto thy
præscripta tua, * et non precepts, and not unto
in avarítiam. covetousness.
- 37 Avérte óculos meos, ne Turn away mine eyes,
videant vanitátem; * per that they may not behold
viam tuam da mihi vi- vanity; through thy way
tam. give me life.
- 38 Adimple servo tuo pro- Fulfill thy promise to thy
míssum tuum, * quod servant, which was given to
datum est timéntibus te. them that fear thee.
- 39 Aufer oppróbrium me- Take away my reproach
um, quod formído, * quia which I fear, for thy ordi-
decréta tua jucúnda. nances are delightful.
- 40 Ecce desidero præcépta Behold I long after thy de-
tua: * secúndum æqui- crees: give me life accord-
tátem tuam tríbue mihi ing to thy justice.
vjtam.

VAU

The Law gives courage:

- 41 Et véniant super me mi- Let thy mercies come up-
seratiónes tuæ, Dómine, on me, O Lord, thy help
* auxílium tuum secún- according to thy promise.
dum promíssum tuum.
- 42 Et respondébo verbum And I shall answer them
exprobrántibus mihi, * that reproach me; for I
304 quia spero in verbis tuis. trust in thy words.

1. Noli auférre de ore meo Take not thou the word of *Psalm*
verbum veritátis, * quia truth from my mouth, for
in decrétis tuis spero. I trust in thy ordinances. **118**
4. Et custódiam legem And I shall always keep
tuam semper, * in sæculum et in sempitérnum. thy law, for ever and ever.
4. Et ambulábo in via And I shall walk on a wide
spatiósa, * quia præcép- path, for I seek thy de-
ta tua exquiro. crees.
10. Et loquar de præscrip- And I shall speak of thy
tis tuis in conspéctu precepts in the presence of
regum, * et non confún- kings, and shall not be
dar. ashamed.
4. Et delectábor mandátis And I shall delight in thy
tuis, * quæ diligo. commands, which I love.
18. Et attóllam manus me- And I shall lift up my
as ad mandáta tua * et hands to thy commands
meditábor statúta tua. and meditate on thy laws.

ZAIN

Consolation from the Law:

49. Memor esto verbi tui Be thou mindful of thy
servo tuo, * quo mihi word to thy servant, by
spem dedísti. which thou hast given me
hope.
50. Hoc est solátium meum This is my consolation in
in afflictiónē mea, * quod my suffering, that thy word
elóquium tuum largitur gives me life.
mihi vitam.
51. Superbi insúltant mihi The proud have me great-
veheménter; * a lege tua ly in derision; from thy
non declíno. law I decline not.
52. Memor sum antiquó- I remember thy judg-
rum judiciórum tuórum, ments of old, O Lord, and
Dómine, * et solácium am comforted.
est mihi.
63. Indignátio tenet me Indignation takes hold of
propter peccatóres, * qui me because of the wicked,
derelinquunt legem tu- that forsake thy law.
am.

Psalm *Cármina facta sunt* Thy laws are become my
 118 *mihi statúta tua* * in lo- songs in the place of my
co peregrinaciónis meæ. pilgrimage.

- 55 *Memor sum nocte nó-* In the night I remember
minis tui, Dómine, * *et* thy name, O Lord, and I
custódiam legem tuam. will keep thy law.
 56 *Hoc factum est mihi,* * This happened to me, be-
quia præcépta tua ser- cause I observed thy de-
vávi. crees.

HETH

Devotion to the Law:

- 57 *Portiónem meam dixi,* I have said, O Lord, that
Dómine, * *custodíre ver-* my portion is to keep thy
ba tua. words.
 58 *Déprecor fáciem tuam* I seek thy favor with my
toto corde, * *miserére* whole heart, have mercy
mei secúndum promís- on me according to thy
sum tuum. promise.
 59 *Perpéndi vias meas,* * I have considered my
et convérsti pedes meos ways, and I have turned my
ad præscrípta tua. feet unto thy precepts.
 60 *Festinávi et non sum* I have hastened and have
cunctátus * *custodíre* not been slow to keep thy
mandáta tua. commands.
 61 *Funes peccatórum cir-* The cords of the wicked
cumpléxi sunt me: * *le-* have encompassed me: I
gem tuam non sum oblí- have not forgotten thy law.
tus.
 62 *Média nocte surgo ad* I rise at midnight to
celebrándum te * *de ju-* praise thee for thy just or-
stis decretis tuis. dinances.
 63 *Amícus sum ómnium* I am the friend of all that
timéntium te * *et custo-* fear thee and observe thy
díentium præcépta tua. decrees.
 64 *Grátia tua, Dómine,* The earth, O Lord, is full
plena est terra; * *statúta* of thy loving-kindness;
 306 *tua doce me.* teach me thy laws.

TETH

God's goodness in the Law:

Psalm

118

- 5 Eene fecísti servo tuo, Thou hast dealt bounti-
 * Dómine, secúndum fully with thy servant, O
 verbum tuum. Lord, according to thy
 word.
- 6 Judícium et sciéntiam Teach me judgment and
 doce me, * quia mandá- knowledge, for I trust in
 tis tuis confido. thy commands.
- 7 Priúsqvam afflictus Before I was afflicted, I
 sum, errávi; * nunc vero went astray; but now I
 elóquium tuum custódio. keep thy word.
- 8 Bonus es tu et benefá- Thou art good and bene-
 ciens; * doce me statúta ficient; teach me thy laws.
 tua.
- 9 Machinántur fraudes The proud invent lies
 contra me supérbi, * ego against me, I observe thy
 toto corde obsérvo præ- decrees with my whole
 cépta tua. heart.
- 10 Incrassátum est ut Their heart is as thick as
 adeps cor eórum; * ego grease, I delight in thy law.
 lege tua deléctor.
- 11 Bonum mihi, quod afflí- It is good for me that I
 ctus sum, * ut discam have been afflicted, so that
 statúta tua. I may learn thy laws.
- 12 Mélior est mihi lex oris The law of thy mouth is
 tui, * quam mília auri better to me than thou-
 et argénti. sands of gold and silver.

IOD

It is just:

- 13 Manus tuæ fecerunt Thy hands have made me
 me et formavérunt me; and formed me; instruct
 * instrue me, ut discam me, that I may learn thy
 mandáta tua. commands.
- 14 Qui timent te, vidébunt They that fear thee shall
 me et lætabúntur, * quod see me and shall be glad,
 in verbum tuum sperávi. because I have hoped in
 thy word.

- Psalm* Scio, Dómine, justa es— I know, O Lord, that thy
118 se decréta tua, * et jure ordinances are just, and
afflíxísti me. thou hast afflicted me just-
ly.
- 76 Adsit misericórdia tua, Let thy mercy be at hand
ut consolétur me, * to comfort me, according
secúndum promíssum to the promise which thou
quod dedísti servo tuo. gavest thy servant.
- 77 Véniant mihi misera- Let thy tender mercies
tiónes tuæ, ut vivam, * come unto me, that I may
quia lex tua delectátio live, for thy law is my de-
mea est. light.
- 78 Confundántur supérbi, Let the proud be ashamed.
quia immérito affligunt because they afflict me un-
me; * ego meditábor de justly: I will meditate on
præcéptis tuis. thy decrees.
- 79 Convertántur ad me Let those that fear thee
timéntes te, * et qui turn to me, and those that
curent præscrípta tua. look to thy precepts.
- 80 Sit cor meum perféc- Let my heart be perfect in
tum in statútis tuis, * thy laws, that I may not be
ut non confúndar. confounded.

CAPH

The Law is true:

- 81 Déficit desidério auxílii My soul grows faint with
tui ánima mea; * in longing for thy help: I
verbum tuum spero. hope in thy word.
- 82 Deficiunt óculi mei desidério elóquii tui: * Mine eyes fail with long-
quando consoláberis me? ing for thy word: when
wilt thou comfort me?
- 83 Nam, factus sicut uter For, though I am become
in fumo, * statúta tua like a wine-skin in smoke.
non sum oblítus. I have not forgotten thy
laws.
- 84 Quot sunt dies servi How many are the days of
tui? * quando fácies de thy servant? When wilt
persequéntibus me judí- thou execute judgment on
cium? them that persecute me?

- 5 Fodérunt mihi supérbi The proud have dug pits *Psalm*
fóveas, * qui non secún- for me, they that do not act **118**
dam legem tuam agunt. according to thy law.
- 6 Omnia mandáta tua All thy commands are
sunt fidélia; * immérito faithful; they persecute me
persequúntur me: ád- unjustly: do thou help me.
juva me.
- 7 Propémódum confecé- They almost made an end
runt me in terra; * ego of me upon earth; but I
autem non derelíqui have not forsaken thy de-
præcépta tua. crees.
- 8 Secúndum misericórdi- According to thy mercy
am tuam serva me vi- keep me living, and I will
vum, * et custódiam keep the precepts of thy
præscrípta oris tui. mouth.

LAMED

Eternity and immutability of God's Law:

- 9 In ætérnum, Dómine, Thy word, O Lord, stands
est verbum tuum * stá- firm forever as heaven.
bile ut cælum.
- 10 In generatióem et ge- Thy faithfulness is unto
neratióem est fidélitas all generations: thou hast
tua: * condidísti terram, founded the earth, and it
quæ pérmanet. endures.
- 11 Secúndum decréta tua According to thy ordi-
constant omni témpore, nances they remain always,
* quia univérsa sérvunt for all things serve thee.
tibi.
- 12 Nisi lex tua delectátio Unless thy law had been
mea esset, * jam pérís- my delight, I should al-
sem in afflictióne mea. ready have perished in my
affliction.
- 13 In ætérnum non obli- Thy decrees I will never
viscar præcépta tua, * forget, for by them thou
quia ipsis dedísti mihi hast given me life.
vitam.
- 14 Tuus sum ego: salvum I am thine: save thou me,
me fac, * quóniam præ- for I have sought thy de-
cépta tua quæsi. crees.

- Psalm* Me expéctant peccátore- The wicked wait for me to
118 res ut perdant me; * ad destroy me; I give heed to
 præscripta tua atténdo. thy precepts.
 96 Omnis perfectiónis vidi I have seen that there is
 esse términum: * latís- an end of all perfection:
 sime patet mandátum thy command is exceeding
 tuum. broad.

MEM

God's Law imparts great wisdom:

- 97 Quam díligo legem tu- How I love thy law, O
 am, Dómine! * toto Lord! it is my meditation
 die meditátio mea est. all day long.
 98 Inimícis meis sapien- Thy command has made
 tiórem me fecit mandá- me wiser than my enemies,
 tum tuum, * quia in for it is ever with me.
 ætérnum mecum est.
 99 Omnibus docéntibus I am more prudent than
 me prudéntior sum, * all my teachers, for my
 quia de præscriptis thy meditation is on thy pre-
 meditátio mea est. cepts.
 100 Sénibus intelligéntior I understand more than
 sum, * quia præcépta the ancients, for I observe
 tua obsérvo. thy decrees.
 101 Ab omni via mala cohí- I restrain my feet from
 beo pedes meos, * ut every evil way, that I may
 custódiám verba tua. keep thy words.
 102 A decrétiis tuis non de- I decline not from thy or-
 clíno, * quia tu docuísti dinances, for thou hast
 me. taught me.
 103 Quam dúlcia paláto How sweet are thy words
 meo elóquia tua! * super to my palate! They are
 mel sunt ori meo. more than honey to my
 mouth.
 104 Præcéptis tuis intéli- By thy decrees I am made
 gens fio, * proptérea odi to understand, therefore I
 omnem viam iniquitá- hate every way of iniquity

NUN

A guide to the psalmist:

Psalm

118

Lucérna pèdibus meis Thy word is a lamp to my
verbum tuum, * et lu- feet, and a light to my path.
men sèmitæ meæ.

Juro et státuo * custo- I swear and am deter-
dire justa decréta tua. mined to keep thy just or-
dinances.

Afflictus sum vehemén- I am afflicted, O Lord, ex-
ter, Dómine: * vivum ceedingly: keep me living
me serva secúndum ver- according to thy word.
bum tuum.

Oblatiónes oris mei ác- Accept the free-will offer-
cipe, Dómine, * et decré- ings of my mouth, O Lord,
ta tua doce me. and teach me thy ordi-
nances.

Vita mea periclitátur My life is always in dan-
semper, * sed legem tu- ger, but I do not forget thy
am non oblivíscor. law.

Posuérunt peccatóres Sinners have laid a snare
laqueum mihi, * sed a for me, but I have not erred
præcéptis tuis non aber- from thy decrees.
rávi.

Heréditas mea præ- Thy precepts are my in-
scrípta tua in ætérnum, heritance forever, because
* quia gáudium cordis they are the joy of my
mei sunt. heart.

Inclinávi cor meum ad I have inclined my heart
statúta tua implénda: * to fulfill thy laws: perpetu-
perpétuo, ad amússim. ally, accurately.

SAMECH

The psalmist's loyalty to the Law:

Dúplices corde ódio há- I hate them that are of a
beo, * et díligo legem double mind, and I love thy
tuam. law.

Protéctor meus et cli- Thou art my protector and
peus meus es tu: * in my shield: I hope in thy
verbum tuum spero. word.

- Psalm* Discédite a me maligni, Depart from me, ye malignant, and I will observe the commands of my God.
- 118** Dei mei.
- ¹¹⁶ Susténta me secúndum promíssum tuum, et vivam; * noli confúndere spem meam. Uphold me according to thy promise, and I shall live; do not confound my hope.
- ¹¹⁷ Adjuva me et salvus ero, * et atténdam ad statúta tua semper. Help me and I shall be saved, and I will always give heed to thy laws.
- ¹¹⁸ Spernis omnes discedéntes a statútis tuis, * quia mendax est cogitatio córum. Thou dost reject all that depart from thy laws, for their thought is deceitful.
- ¹¹⁹ Scórias réputas omnes peccatóres terræ, * ideo diligo præscrípta tua. Thou dost count as dross all the sinners of the earth, therefore I love thy precepts.
- ¹²⁰ Horrêscit timóre tui caro mea, * et decréta tua timeo. My flesh shudders with fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy ordinances.

AIN

He will keep the Law, transgressed by the wicked.

- ¹²¹ Exércui jus et justítiam: * noli me trádere oppriméntibus me. I have exercised right and justice: give me not up to them that oppress me.
- ¹²² Sponde pro servo tuo in bonum, * ne opprimant me supérbi. Be surety for thy servant unto good, let not the proud oppress me.
- ¹²³ Oculi mei deficiunt desidério auxilií tui, * et justí elóquii tui. Mine eyes fail with desire of thy help, and of thy just word.
- ¹²⁴ Fac cum servo tuo secúndum bonitátem tuam, * et statúta tua doce me. Deal with thy servant according to thy goodness, and teach me thy laws.
- ¹²⁵ Servus tuus sum ego, instrue me, * ut cognóscam præscrípta tua. I am thy servant, instruct me, that I may know thy precepts.
- 312**

- 26 Tempus agéndi est Dómino: * violavérunt legem tuam. It is time for the Lord to act: they have broken thy law. *Psalm* **118**
- 27 Ideo díligo mandáta tua, * plus quam aurum et obrýzum. Therefore I love thy commands more than gold and fine gold.
- 28 Ideo ómnia præcépta tua elégi mihi; * omnem viam falsam ódio hábeo. Therefore I have chosen for myself all thy decrees; I hate every deceitful way.

PHE

God's Law is marvelous:

- 29 Mirabilia sunt præscripta tua, * ideo ob-sérvat ea ánima mea. Thy precepts are wonderful, therefore my soul observes them.
- 30 Declarátio verbórum tuórum illúminat, * docet inexpértos. The unfolding of thy words gives light, it teaches those without experience.
- 31 Os meum apério et átraho auram, * quia mandáta tua desídero. I open my mouth and pant, because I long for thy commands.
- 32 Convértere ad me et miserére mei, * ut soles erga diligéntes nomen tuum. Turn toward me and have mercy on me, as is thy wont toward them that love thy name.
- 33 Gressus meos dírige secúndum elóquium tuum, * neque ulla dominétur in me nequítia. Direct my steps according to thy word, and let no wickedness have dominion over me.
- 34 Líbera me ab oppres-sióne hóminum, * et custódiam præcépta tua. Deliver me from the oppression of men, and I will keep thy decrees.
- 35 Serénum præbe vultum tuum servo tuo, * et doce me statúta tua. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and teach me thy laws.
- 36 Rivi aquárum fluxérunt de óculis meis, * quia non custodiérunt legem tuam. Streams of water have flowed from my eyes, because they have not kept thy law.

Psalm

SADE

118

The purity and truth of the Law:

- Justus es, Dómine, * et Thou art just, O Lord, and
rectum iudicium tuum. thy judgment is right.
- 138 Cum iustitia imposuisti præscripta tua * et With justice thou hast
imposed thy precepts, and
cum firmitate magna. with great firmness.
- 139 Consumit me zelus meus, * quia obliviscuntur My zeal consumes me, be-
cause my enemies forget
verba tua adversarii mei. thy words.
- 140 Probatum est elóquium Thy word is tried to the
tuum valde, * et servus uttermost, and thy servant
tuus diligit illud. loves it.
- 141 Párvulus sum et contéptus: * præcepta tua I am little and despised: I
forget not thy decrees.
non oblivíscor.
- 142 Iustitia tua est iustitia Thy justice is justice for-
æterna, * et lex tua ever, and thy law is stead-
firma. fast.
- 143 Angústia et tribulatio Anguish and trouble have
venerunt super me, * come upon me, thy com-
mandata tua delíciæ mandams are my delight.
meæ sunt.
- 144 Iustitia præscriptórum The justice of thy pre-
tuórum æterna est, * in cepts is forever, teach me
strue me et vivam. and I shall live.

COPH

Faithfulness to the Law:

- 145 Clamo ex toto corde I cry with my whole heart
meo: exáudi me, Dó- hear me, O Lord: I keep thy
mine; * statuta tua ob- laws.
sérvó.
- 146 Clamo ad te; salvum I cry unto thee; save me
me fac, * et custódiam and I will keep thy pre-
præscripta tua. cepts.
- 147 Vénio dilúculo et auxí- I come at break of day and
lium implóro; * spero in implore thy help; I hope in
verba tua. thy words.

314

Præveniunt óculi mei Mine eyes anticipate the *Psalm*
vigílias noctis, * ut mé- night-watches, that I may
diter elóquium tuum. meditate on thy word. **118**

Vocem meam audi se- Hear thou my voice, O
cundum misericórdiam Lord, according to thy
tuam, Dómine, * et se- mercy, and give me life ac-
cundum decretum tuum cording to thy decree.
da mihi vitam.

Appropínquant perse- They draw near that per-
quentes me iníque; * a secute me unjustly; they
lege tua longe absunt. are far off from thy law.

Prope es tu, Dómine, * Thou art near, O Lord,
et ómnia mandáta tua and all thy commands are
fidélia. faithful.

Pridem cognóvi ex præ- I have known long ago
scriptis tuis * te in ætér- from thy precepts that
nam fundásse ea. thou hast founded them
for ever.

RES

A prayer of one faithful to the Law:

Vide afflictiónem meam See my misery and deliver
et éripe me, * quia legem me, for I have not forgotten
tuam non sum oblitus. thy law.

Defénde causam meam Plead my cause and re-
et rédime me; * secún- deem me; grant me life ac-
dum elóquium tuum lar- cording to thy word.
gire mihi vitam.

Longe a peccatóribus Salvation is far from sin-
salus, * quia statúta tua ners, because they give no
non curant. heed to thy laws.

Miseratiónes tuæ mul- Many, O Lord, are thy
tae, Dómine; * secún- mercies; grant me life ac-
dum decreta tua largire mihi cording to thy decrees.
vitam.

Multi persecúntur me Many persecute me and
et tribulant me: * a præ- afflict me: I decline not
scriptis tuis non declíno. from thy precepts.

Vidi prævaricántes et I beheld the transgressors
tæduit me, * quia eló- and it wearied me, because **315**

Psalm quium tuum non custo- they kept not thy word
diérunt.

118 Vide, præcépta tua dí- Behold, I love thy decrees,
ligo, Dómine; * secún- O Lord; keep me alive ac-
dum misericórdiam tu- cording to thy mercy.
am vivum me serva.

160 Verbi tui caput con- The sum of thy word i-
stántia est,* et ætérnum constancy, and every de-
est omne decretum ju- cree of thy justice is for-
stitiæ tuæ. ever.

SIN

The Law fills his heart with joy and hope:

161 Príncipes persecúntur me sine causa, * without cause, but my
verba autem tua verétur heart stands in awe of thy
cor meum. words.

162 Lætor de elóquiis tuis, I rejoice in thy words, as
* sicut qui invénit præ- one that finds great spoil.
dam multam.

163 Iniquitátem ódio hábeo I hate and loathe wicked-
et detéstor; * diligo le- ness; I love thy law.
gem tuam.

164 Sépties in die laudem Seven times a day I give
dico tibi * propter justa praise to thee for thy just
judícia tua. judgments.

165 Pax multa diligentibus Much peace have they
legem tuam, * neque that love thy law, and for
ullum est illis offendí- them there is no stumbling-
culum. block.

166 Præstólor auxiliú tu- I look for thy help, O
um. Dómine. * et fácio Lord, and do all thy com-
mandáta tua. mands.

167 Custódit ánima mea My soul guards thy pre-
præscrípta tua, * et díli- cepts, and loves them dear-
git ea valde. ly.

168 Custódio præcépta et I keep thy decrees and
jussa tua, * quia omnes commands, because all my
viæ meæ in conspéctu ways are in thy sight.

TAU

A concluding prayer for help:

Psalm
118

3. Clamor meus ad te veniat, Dómine: * secúndum verbum tuum in-true me. Let my cry come unto thee, O Lord: teach me according to thy word.
4. Pervéniat precátio mea ad te, * secúndum elóquium tuum éripe me. Let my prayer reach unto thee, deliver thou me according to thy word.
5. Fundant lábia mea hymnum, * cum docúeris me statúta tua. Let my lips pour forth a hymn, when thou shalt teach me thy laws.
6. Cantet lingua mea elóquium tuum, * quia ómnia mandáta tua sunt justa. Let my tongue sing thy word, because all thy commands are just.
7. Adsit manus tua, ut ádjuvet me, * quia præcepta tua elégi. Be thy hand near, to help me, because I have chosen thy decrees.
8. Cúpio salútem a te, Dómine, * et lex tua delectatio mea est. I long for salvation from thee, O Lord, and thy law is my delight.
9. Vivat ánima mea et laudet te, * et decréta tua ádjuvent me. Let my soul live and praise thee, and let thy ordinances help me.
10. Oberro ut ovis quæ periit; quære servum tuum, * quia mandáta tua non sum oblítus. I wander about like a sheep that is lost; seek thy servant, because I have not forgotten thy commands.

Commentary

This psalm is composed of 22 strophes of eight distichs each. In the Hebrew the strophes are alphabetic—i.e., each distich in a given strophe begins with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet, beginning with Aleph and ending with Tau. In every distich the revealed law of God is extolled under a variety of names and formalities: the law, the precepts, the way and course (of life prescribed by God), commands, the laws, decrees, justice, equity, (God's justice revealed), faithfulness, word, utterance, speech (of the Lord) precept.—The psalm is repetitious and without logical order. It may be divided roughly as follows: 1-56. The law brings good to man.

Psalm 119 57-96. Because it is good, just, true, eternal; 97-112. Because it enlightens and helps the afflicted. 113-128. It should be dear to man, 129-160. Because it is wonderful, right, eternal, just. 161-176. Bringing peace and help to the obedient.—

83: "The wine-skin in the frost" of the Vulgate is, in the Hebrew, "The wine-skin in the smoke," both describe the deteriorating effect of affliction on the psalmist.

Reflection

This psalm was a manual of piety and doctrine for young Israelites. One lesson it teaches us is to carry our Missals and prayer-books to divine service. They not only will assist us in maintaining a fervent attitude in church, but they will keep before our minds the eternal truths of God.

PSALM 119

Against Evil Tongues

For Protection Against One's Enemies

Prayer against vile tongues. In past troubles God has often heard the psalmist, and now beset by evil men who plot against him he again prays for deliverance, bemoaning the while his sojourn among them.

Against malignant tongues:

¹ Canticum ascensionum.

A song of ascents.

Ad Dóminum, cum tribulárer, clamávi * et **I**n my trouble I cried to the Lord, and he heard me. exaudivit me.

² Dómine, libera ánimam meam a lábio iníquo, * O Lord, deliver my soul from the wicked lip, from a lingua dolósa.— the deceitful tongue.

³ Quid dabit tibi aut quid addet tibi, * lingua dolósa? What will he give to thee or what will he add to thee, thou deceitful tongue?

⁴ Sagíttas poténtis acútas * et carbónes genístárum.— The sharp arrows of the mighty and burning coals

A complaint about his hostile neighbors:

⁵ Heu mihi, quod dego in Mosoch, * hábito in tentóriis Cedar! Wee is me, that I tarry in Mosoch, that I dwell in the tents of Cedar!

318 Nímium habitávit áni- Too long has my soul so-

PRAYER IN NECESSITY—also Psalms 54, 63, 93, 122, 124

ma mea * cum iis, qui journeyed with them that *Psalm*
odérunt pacem. hate peace.

Ego pacem cum loquor, When I speak peace they **120**
* illi urgent ad bellum. press hard for war.

Commentary

This is the first of 15 psalms (119-133) entitled "Song of Ascents." The title is variously explained. Two of the more common explanations are given here: 1. The psalms were sung on the steps leading from the Court of Women to the Court of Men in the Temple. 2. They were sung by the pilgrims coming up to Jerusalem on the festival days. 3. The psalmist here recalls how the Lord has heard his prayer against deceitful tongues. The Lord will heap upon them sharp and burning punishment.

5-7: Still the psalmist bemoans his exile in the midst of such men. For though he strives to live peacefully with them, they hate peace and want strife.

Reflection

This psalm should remind us of the pitiful plight of the souls in Purgatory. Never let a day pass without beseeching God that they may be quickly released from their pains.

PSALM 120

Our Faithful Protector

Act of Reliance on Divine Providence

The loving providence of God. The Lord never sleeps; but like a good shepherd carefully watches over those who put their trust in him, so as to keep them from all evil.

Longing for a glimpse of the holy hills of Jerusalem:

1 Canticum ascensionum. A song of ascents.

Attóllo óculos meos in I lift up mine eyes unto
montes: * unde vé the mountains: whence
niet auxílium mihi? shall help come to me?

Auxílium meum a Dó- My help is from the Lord,
mino, * qui fecit cælum who made heaven and
et terram.— earth.

Absolute confidence in God:

Non sinet nutáre pe- He will not suffer thy foot
dem tuum, * non dormi- to stumble, nor shall he
tábit, qui custódit te. slumber that keeps thee.

- Psalm* Ecce non dormitabit Behold, he that guard-
neque dormiet, * qui cu- Israel will neither slumber
121 stódit Israël.— nor sleep.
- 5 Dóminus custódit te, * The Lord keeps thee, the
Dóminus protéctio tua a Lord is thy protection at
látere dextro tuo. thy right side.
- 6 Per diem sol non féríet The sun shall not smite
te, * neque luna per thee by day, nor the moon
noctem.— by night.
- 7 Dóminus custódiet te The Lord will keep thee
ab omni malo: * custó- from all evil: he will keep
diet ánimam tuam. thy soul.
- 8 Dóminus custódiet éx- The Lord will keep thy go-
itum tuum et intróitum ing out and thy coming in.
tuum,* et nunc et usque both now and for ever.
in sáeculum.

Commentary

The psalmist looks hopefully to the hills (of Jerusalem) whence the Lord's help comes.

3-8: He is assured that the ever-vigilant Guardian of Israel will protect his path and shelter him from everything harmful as he goes to and returns from Jerusalem.

Reflection

God keeps our going in and our coming out, since his grace enables us to overcome temptations, and to avoid any dangerous security in the peace that follows.

PSALM 121

Joy in the Holy City

For the Peace and Security of the Church

A joyful hymn sung by the pilgrims as they entered Jerusalem. The entrance into the Holy City is a signal for great rejoicing: it is also a time of prayer for the blessings of peace and security.

A joyful salute to the Holy City:

- 1 Canticum ascensionum. Da- A song of ascents by David.
vidis.

Lætátus sum, quia dixé- I rejoiced, because they
runt mihi: * "In do- said to me: "We shall go
320 mum Dómini íbimus." into the house of the Lord."

- 2 Jam consistunt pedes Our feet are already *Psalms*
 nostri * in portis tuis, standing within thy gates, **121**
 Jerúsalem, O Jerusalem,
 3 Jerúsalem quæ ædifi- Jerusalem, which is built
 cāta est ut civitas, * in as a city, all compact in it-
 se compācta tota.— self.

Praise of Jerusalem:

- 4 Illuc ascēdunt tribus, Thither the tribes go up,
 tribus Dómini, * secūn- the tribes of the Lord, ac-
 dum legem Israël, ad cording to the law of Israel,
 celebrāndum nomen Dó- to praise the name of the
 mini. Lord.
 5 Illic pōsitæ sunt sedes There are set thrones of
 judiciī, * sedes domus judgment, the thrones of
 David.— the house of David.

A prayer for the future prosperity of Jerusalem:

- 6 Rogāte quæ ad pacem Pray ye for the things that
 sunt Jerúsalem! * secū- are for the peace of Jerusa-
 ri sint qui dīligunt te! lem! May they be safe that
 love thee!
 7 Sit pax in mōenibus Peace be within thy walls,
 tuis, * securitas in pa- safety in thy palaces!
 lātiis tuis!
 8 Propter fratres meos et For the sake of my breth-
 sodāles meos * loquar: ren and my companions, I
 Pax in te! will say: Peace be within
 thee!
 9 Propter domum Dómi- Because of the house of
 ni, Dei nostri, * precābor the Lord, our God, I will en-
 bona tibi. treat good things for thee.

Commentary

As the psalmist approaches Jerusalem he looks forward with joy to being in the Temple and seeing the Holy City.

4-5: He rejoices at the thought of Jerusalem whither all the tribes go for the great feasts, and where justice is meted out to the children of Israel.

6-9: The psalmist exhorts the pilgrims to pray for the Holy City, that it may enjoy peace and prosperity. Mindful that his friends and even God himself dwells within this city, he prays for its peace.

Psalm

122

Reflection

Let us thank God for having called us to be members of the Catholic Church, having even greater enthusiasm than the Jewish pilgrims when they beheld the portals of their Temple.

PSALM 122

Hope under Oppression

When Subject to Contempt by Others

Afflicted Israel's cry for help. The people in great distress look up to their God in heaven, imploring his merciful deliverance from the derision of their oppressors.

The spirit of confidence:

1 Canticum ascensionum.

A song of ascents.

Ad te attollo oculos **T**o thee I lift up my eyes.
meos, * qui habitas **T**who dwellest in heaven
in cælis.

2 Ecce, sicut oculi servorum **B**ehold, as the eyes of serv-
rum * ad manus domi- ants are on the hands of
norum suorum, their masters.

Sicut oculi ancillæ * ad **A**s the eyes of the hand-
manus dominæ suæ: maid are on the hands of
her mistress:

Ita oculi nostri ad Dó- **S**o do our eyes look to the
minum, Deum nostrum, Lord our God, until he have
* donec misereatur no- mercy on us.
stri.—

A plea of suffering Israel:

3 Miserere nostri, Dómi- **H**ave mercy on us, O Lord
ne, miserere nostri, * have mercy on us, for we
quia multum satiati sum- are well filled with con-
mus despectiône; tempt:

4 Multum satiata est áni- **O**ur soul is all too full of
ma nostra * irrisiône the scorning of the rich, of
abundantium, despecti- the contempt of the proud
iône superbórum.

Commentary

322 **T**he psalmist and the people look up to God for mercy as slaves to their masters.

3-4: He begs for mercy; too long have the people felt the stings of the oppressor. *Psalm*

Reflection

123

In suffering never become rebellious because of injured pride. Look up to heaven, and through your tears you will see a kindly God.

PSALM 123

The Great Liberator

For Gratitude for Overcoming Temptation

Thanksgiving for deliverance in a great crisis. A description of the terrible destruction that would have resulted had God not come to his peoples' rescue; they renew their confidence in God.

Except for God's help, Israel would have been destroyed:

- 1 Canticum ascensionum. David. A song of ascents by David.
vidis.

Nisi Dóminus fuisset pro nobis, * dicat jam Israë!, If the Lord had not been on our side, let Israel now say,

- 2 Nisi Dóminus fuisset If the Lord had not been
pro nobis: cum insúr- on our side: when men rose
gerent hómines in nos, * up against us, then they
3 tunc vivos deglutissent would have swallowed us
nos. up alive.

Cum exandésceret fu- When their fury burned
ror eórum in nos, * against us, then the water
4 tunc aqua submersisset would have overwhelmed
nos; us;

Torrens transisset su- The torrent would have
per nos; * 5 tunc transís- surged over us; then the
sent super nos aquæ tu- seething waters would have
méntes.— gone over us.

Thanksgiving:

- 6 Benedíctus Dóminus, Blessed be the Lord, who
qui non dedit nos * in has not given us as a prey
prædam déntibus eó- to their teeth.
rum.

- Psalm* Anima nostra sicut avis Our soul has been snatch-
124 erépta est * de láqueo ed like a bird from the
 venántium: snare of the fowlers:
 Láqueus contrítus est, The snare is broken, and
 * et nos liberáti sumus. we are delivered.
 s Adjutórium nostrum in Our help is in the name of
 nómine Dómini, * qui the Lord, who made heaven
 fecit cælum et terram. and earth.

Commentary

If God had not been with Israel, furious enemies, like wild beasts, would have devoured her; or, like a flood, they would have overwhelmed her.

6-8: It was God who snatched Israel from the jaws of her enemy, like a bird set free from the fowler's snare. Israel's help is from the Creator of the world.

Reflection

Our lives are a warfare. We are often tried by temptation. Ask God in all humility: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

PSALM 124

The Lord's Protection

Against the Danger of Falling Away

Trust in the Lord. The wicked will not prevail against the chosen people because God surrounds them with his sure protection, so as to maintain them in peace.

Motives for trusting in God:

- 1 Canticum ascensionum. A song of ascents.
Qui confidunt in Dómino, sunt sicut mons **T**hey that trust in the
 Sion, * qui non commo- Lord are as Mount Sion,
 vétur, qui manet in ætér- which is not moved, which
 num. endures for ever.
- 2 Jerúsalem circúmdant Mountains surround Je-
 montes: * ita Dóminus rusalem: so the Lord sur-
 circúmdat pópulum su- rounds his people, both
 um, et nunc et in ætér- now and for ever.
 num.—

324 Neque enim manébit Neither shall the scepter

sceptrum impiórum * of the wicked rest upon the *Psalm*
super sortem justórum, lot of the just,
Ne exténdant justí * ad Lest the just put forth **125**
iniquitátem manus suas. their hands unto iniquity.

A prayer for the faithful:

Bénéfac, Dómine, bonis Do good, O Lord, to those
et rectis corde. that are good and to them
that are upright of heart.

Qui autem declínant in But as for them that turn
vias suas oblíquas, ábi- aside into their evil ways,
gat eos Dóminus cum may the Lord drive them
male agéntibus: * pax away with the workers of
super Israë! iniquity; peace be upon
Israel!

Commentary

The man who puts his trust in God is as firm and unshakable as Mount Zion. For as the surrounding hills protect her so the Lord protects them against sinners.

4-5: The psalmist prays that God will show special favor to the good and cast out hypocrites. The psalm closes with a blessing.

Reflection

At the Last Supper Jesus said to his apostles: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you." That Christlike peace was a promise of eternal happiness together with the assurance of temporal blessings that are conducive to heaven.

PSALM 125

Joy after Captivity

For Hope Amid Tears

Prayers after the Babylonian captivity. There is great rejoicing among the people for the great things the Lord has done for them; they hope for an improvement of their present sad state.

Thanksgiving that the exile is over:

¹ Canticum ascensionum. A song of ascents.

Cum redúceret Dómi- **W**hen the Lord led back
nus captívos Sion, * the captives of Sion, **325**

Psalm **125** *fúimus sicut somniántes.* we were like men in a dream.

*Tunc replétum est risu os nostrum, * et lingua nostra exsultatióne.* Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with rejoicing.

*Tunc dixerunt inter gentes: * "Magnífice fecit Dóminus cum eis."* Then did they say among the nations: "The Lord has done great things for them."

*3 Magnífice fecit Dóminus nobiscum: * facti sumus lætántes!—* The Lord has done great things for us: we are become joyful!

A prayer for complete restoration:

*4 Verte, Dómine, sortem nostram, * sicut torréntes in terra austráli.* Change our lot, O Lord, as streams in the south.

*5 Qui séminant in lácrimis, * in exsultatióne metent.* They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy.

*6 Eúntes eunt et plorant, * semen spargéndum portántes:* Going, they go and weep, carrying seed for sowing:

*Veníéntes vénient cum exsultatióne, * portántes manípulos suos.* Coming, they shall come with rejoicing, carrying their sheaves.

Commentary

When the exiles learned that the Babylonian Captivity was over, they were so happy they could not believe the report. Laughter and joy were on their lips. Even their captors, the psalmist says, confessed that the Lord had magnificently fulfilled his promises to Israel.

4-5: The psalmist, mindful of present sorrows, asks God to awaken their sluggish hopes as the rains bring to life the parched river beds of the land. Suffering is but a seed-time which will certainly yield a harvest of gladness.

Reflection

326 **N**ever let a day pass without praying that our separated brethren may soon return to the loving arms of Holy Mother Church.

PSALM 126

Psalm

Source of Prosperity

126

For Success in Important Undertakings

Without God man can do nothing. All depends on his blessing, without it we labor in vain. A large family is the gift of the Almighty, and secures for the father influence and respect.

The futility of human effort:

Canticum ascensionum. Sa- A song of ascents by Solomon.
lomonis.

Nisi Dóminus ædificá- **U**nless the Lord build the
verit domum, * in house, they labor in
vanum labórant qui ædi- vain that build it.
ficant eam.

Nisi Dóminus custodié- Unless the Lord keep the
rit civitátem, * in vanum city, the guard keeps watch
vigilat custos. in vain.

Vanum est vobis súr- It is vain for you to rise
gere ante lucem, * se- before light, to sit late into
dere in multam noctem, the night,

Qui manducátis panem You that eat the bread of
duri labóris: * quóniam hard toil: for he gives
largitur diléctis suis in bountifully to his loved
somno.— ones in sleep.

A large family is a blessing from God:

Ecce donum Dómini Behold, children are the
sunt filii, * merces est gift of the Lord, a reward
fructus ventris. is the fruit of the womb.

Sicut sagittæ in manu Like arrows in the hand of
bellatóris, * ita filii ju- the warrior, so are the chil-
ventútis. dren of youth.

Beátus vir qui implé- Blessed is the man that
vit eis pháretram suam: has filled his quiver with
* non confundéntur, them: they shall not be put
cum conténderint cum to shame, when they con-
inimícis in porta. tend with enemies in the
gate.

Psalm

Commentary

127 This psalm is ascribed to Solomon. To labor is vain, unless the Lord is with the work; to defend a city is useless unless the Lord is its guardian. So anxiety about the needs of life is foolish; the Lord provides for his loved ones.

3-5: Children are a blessing, especially children of a man's youth; for they will soon grow up to be the defense of their father.

Reflection

In these days when pagan philosophy and erroneous doctrine are rampant, and affecting even our Catholic people, all married couples would do well to ponder on the words of the psalmist contained in this psalm that among all the gifts of God a numerous family is one of the greatest.

PSALM 127

A Blessed Family

For God's Graces in Married Life

Domestic bliss of him who fears the Lord. His labor, his wife and his children are blessed. These material blessings of the Old Law are a type of the far greater blessings promised in the New.

Blessings of the just man:

¹ Canticum ascensionum.

A song of ascents.

Beátus, quicumque times Dóminum, * qui ámbulas in viis ejus!

Blessed art thou, who ever thou art that fearest the Lord, that walkest in his ways!

² Nam labórem mánuum tuárum manducábis, * beátus eris et bene tibi erit.

For thou shalt eat the labor of thy hands; blessed shalt thou be and it shall be well with thee.

His family will be blessed:

³ Uxor tua sicut vitis fructífera * in penetrálibus domus tuæ,

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine in the inner chambers of thy house,

Fílii tui ut súrculi olivárum * circa mensam tuam.

Thy children shall be as olive sprouts around thy table.

328 Ecce sic benedícitur vi-

Behold, thus shall the

ro, * qui timet Dómi- man be blessed that fears *Psalms*
num!— the Lord.

Prayers for the nation:

128

Benedícat tibi Dómi- May the Lord bless thee
nus ex Sion, * ut vídeas out of Sion, that thou
prosperitátem Jerúsa- mayst see the welfare of
lem ómnibus diébus vitæ Jerusalem all the days of
tuæ; thy life;

Ut vídeas fílios filiórú- That thou mayst see thy
tuórú: * pax super children's children: peace
Israël! be upon Israel!

Commentary

The psalmist sings the praise of home-life. The God-fearing father enjoys the fruit of his honest toil. His wife, devoted to her household, is compared to a fruitful vine. Their sturdy children are like young olive shoots.

5-6: The psalmist prays that God will further bless such a man by granting peace to the holy city, so that he may live to see his children's children.

Reflection

The faithful wife is one whose heart is fixed on her home, who does not spend her time traveling abroad but is content to be with her children. They will be like a fruitful vine.

PSALM 128

Hope Built on Past

Victorious in Oppression

Thanksgiving with a prayer for the destruction of the present enemies of Israel. In times past she suffered continually from oppression and the enemy never prevailed, neither shall he now.

In the past God has protected Israel:

Canticum ascensionum.

A song of ascents.

Multum oppugnávé- **M**uch have they fought
runt me a juventúte against me from my
mea,* dicat nunc Israël: youth, let Israel now say:

Multum oppugnávé- Much have they fought
runt me a juventúte against me from my youth,
mea, * sed non devicé- but they have not pre-
runt me. vailed over me.

Psalm 128 *Supra dorsum meum* The plowmen plowed over
aravérunt aratóres, * my back, they made long
longos duxérunt sulcos their furrows.
suos.

- 4 *Dóminus autem justus* But the just Lord cuts the
* concídit funes impió- cords of the wicked.
rum.—

May Zion's enemies be brought to destruction:

- 5 *Confundántur et ce-* Let them all be confound-
dant retro * omnes qui ed and fall back that hate
odérunt Sion. Sion.
6 *Símiles fiant grámini* Let them be as grass upon
tectórum, * quod, prius the tops of houses, which
quam evellátur, aréscit; withers before it be plucked
up;
7 *Quo non implet ma-* Wherewith the mower fills
num suam, qui metit, * not his hand, nor he that
nec sinum suum, qui gathers sheaves, his bosom.
manípulos cólligit.
8 *Nec dicunt qui præter-* Nor do they that pass by
eunt: "Benedíctio Dómi- say: "The blessing of the
ni super vos!" * "bene- Lord be upon you!" "We
dícimus vobis in nómine bless you in the name of the
Dómini."

Commentary

The psalmist, recalling the sorrowful history of Israel, can still proclaim that the foe has not prevailed. Long furrows have been ploughed in the back of Israel, but the Lord has broken the cords of the plough.

5-8: The psalmist prays that Israel's enemies may fail; that they may wither away as quickly as the grass sprouting in the crannies of the housetops, which dries up beneath the hot sun. The reapers never bother with such stalks; nor do passers-by pronounce the harvest-blessing upon them.

Reflection

The history of Israel was symbolic of the history of the Catholic Church and its members. Ever since the days of Christ the Church has had to suffer. Reflect on the number of its martyrs. May their heroic example make us eager to suffer in defense of our Holy Religion!

PSALM 129

Psalm

Hope of the Sinner

129

For the Practice of Humility

Prayer from the depths of sin to a merciful and forgiving Lord. The sinner will most certainly obtain the forgiveness of his sins, if he has recourse to the goodness of God.

A penitent cry from the depths of sin:

Canticum ascensionum.

A song of ascents.

De profundis clamo ad te, Dómine, * 2 Dómine, audi vocem meam!

Out of the depths I cry unto thee, O Lord, Lord, hear my voice!

Fiant aures tuæ intén-tæ * ad vocem obsecra-tiónis meæ.—

Let thine ears become at-tentive to the voice of my supplication.

Si delictórum memó-riam serváveris, Dómine, * Dómine, quis sustiné-bit?

If thou, O Lord, keep the memory of offenses, Lord, who shall stand?

Sed penes te est pec-catórum vénia, * ut cum reveréntia serviátur tibi.—

But with thee there is for-giveness of sins, so that thou art served with rever-ential fear.

Trust in God:

Spero in Dóminum, * sperat ánima mea in verbum ejus;

I hope in the Lord, my soul hopes in his word;

Exspéctat 4 ánima mea Dóminum, * magis quam custódes auróram.—

My soul longs for the Lord, more than watchmen for the dawn.

Magis quam custódes auróram, * 7 exspéctet Israël Dóminum,

More than watchmen for the dawn, Israel longs for the Lord,

Quia penes Dóminum misericórdia * et copiósa penes cum redemptio:

Because with the Lord there is mercy and with him plentiful redemption:

Et ipse rédimet Israël * ex ómnibus iniquitáti-bus ejus.

And he shall redeem Israel from all her iniquities.

Psalm

Commentary

130 From the depths of his wretchedness the psalmist begs God to hear his tearful cry.

3-4: If God should record iniquities permanently, who could possibly abide his anger? Fortunately, God blots out sin so that man can serve him with reverence.

5-6a: The psalmist takes courage in the divine guarantee that sins are forgiven.

6b-8: Let Israel ever hope in the Lord's forgiveness. The psalmist assures his people that the Lord, in his merciful love, will release them from the fetters of sin.

Reflection

Conscious of our many sins we cry out with St. Peter: "Depart from me, for I am a sinner, man, O Lord." But then remembering that there are more reasons for the manifestation of God's goodness and mercy towards us than of his strict justice, we add: "If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities; Lord, who shall stand it?"

PSALM 130

Peace in Humility

A Prayer of Resignation

Resignation to the designs of God. Renouncing all desires of grandeur the psalmist finds peace and rest for his soul in a childlike confidence in God.

Humble resignation:

- 1 Canticum ascensionum. Davidis. A song of ascents by David.

Dómine, non superbit cor meum, * neque extolluntur óculi mei, Lord, my heart is not proud, nor are mine eyes haughty.

Nec prósequor res grandes * aut altiòres me ipso. Neither do I aspire after great things or matters above me.

- 2 Immo compósui et pacávi * ánimam meam, Indeed I have behaved and calmed myself.

Sicut párvulus in grémio matris suæ: * ita in me est ánima mea. As a little child on the lap of its mother, as a little child, so is my soul within me.

Encouragement to Israel:

Psalms

Spera, Israël, in Dómi- O Israel, hope in the
no, * et nunc et usque Lord, both now and for
in sæculum. ever.

131

Commentary

David (so the title) protests that his thoughts are not proud. As the tender child reposing untroubled in the arms of its mother, so will he trust completely in the Lord. So Israel also should hope in the Lord.

Reflection

In God's blessings let us always have a spirit of deep humility, remembering what St. Francis of Assisi said one day as he saw a sinner passing: "There, but for the grace of God, goes Francis."

PSALM 131

Mutual Promises

To Be Faithful in God's Service

Prayer for the house of David. The king swore that he would build a house for the Lord, and fulfilled his oath. The Lord in turn swore that the Davidic line would rule forever in Jerusalem.

David's resolution to build a Sanctuary to God:

Canticum ascensionum.

A song of ascents.

Memento, Dómine, in **O** Lord, remember in
grátiam David * David's favor all his
omnis sollicitúdinis ejus: trouble:

Quómodo juráverit Dó- How he swore to the Lord,
mino, * votum vóverit how he made a vow to the
Poténti Jacob: Mighty One of Jacob:

Non intrábo in habitá- "I will not enter into the
culum domus meæ, * abode of my house, I will
non ascéndam in stra- not go up to the couch of
tum lecti mei, my bed,

Non concédam som- I will not grant sleep to
num óculis meis, * pál- mine eyes nor rest to mine
pebris meis quiétem, eyelids,

Psalm **131** Donec invénero locum Until I find a place for the
Dómino, * habitatiónem Lord, a dwelling-place for
Poténti Jacob.— the Mighty One of Jacob."

The translation of the Ark to Sion:

- 6 Ecce, audívimus de illa Behold we have heard of it
in Ephrata; * invénimus in Ephrata; we have found
eam in campis Jaar. it in the fields of Iaar.
- 7 Intrémus in habitatió- Let us go into his dwell-
nem ejus, * procidámus ing, let us fall down before
ante scabéllum pedum his footstool.
ejus.
- 8 Surge, Dómine, in lo- Arise, O Lord, into thy
cum quiétis tuæ, * tu et resting-place, thou and the
arca majestátis tuæ. ark of thy majesty.
- 9 Sacerdótes tui induant Let thy priests put on jus-
justítiam, * et sancti tui tice, and let thy holy ones
exsultántes exsúltent. exult, shouting with joy.
- 10 Propter David, servum For the sake of David, thy
tuum, * noli repéllere servant, turn not away the
fáciem uncti tui. face of thy anointed.

God's answer to the people's prayer:

- 11 Jurávit Dóminus David The Lord has sworn
* promíssum firmum a steadfast promise to David
quo non recédet: from which he will not
withdraw:
- "Súbolem géneris tui * "The offspring of thy race
ponam super sólum tu- I will set upon thy throne
um.
- 12 Si custodierint filii tui If thy children will keep
pactum meum,* et præ- my covenant, and the de-
cépta quæ docébo eos, crees which I shall teach
them,
- Etiam filii eórum in Their children also for-
sempitérnum * sedébunt evermore shall sit upon thy
super sólum tuum." throne."
- 13 Nam Dóminus elégit For the Lord has choser
Sion, * eam optávit se- Sion, he has desired it for
dem sibi: his dwelling:

334 "Hæc est réquies mea in "This is my rest for ever

sempiternum, * hic ha- here will I dwell, for I have *Psalm*
bitábo, quóniam optávi chosen it. **131**
eam.

Victui ejus benedicens Blessing I will bless her
benedicam, * páuperes victuals, I will satisfy her
ejus saturábo pane. poor with bread.

Sacerdótes ejus indu- I will clothe her priests
am salúte, * et sancti with salvation, and her
ejus exsultántes exsul- holy ones shall exult,
tábunt. shouting with joy.

Illic David suscitábo There will I raise up a
cornu, * parábo lucér- horn to David, I will make
nam uncto meo. ready a lamp for my
anointed.

Inimícos ejus induam His enemies I will clothe
confusióne, * super ip- with confusion, but upon
sum autem fulgēbit dia- him my diadem shall
dēma meum." shine."

Commentary

The psalmist recalls David's zeal for the Ark of the Cove-
nant and his efforts to secure for it a proper dwelling,
swearing an oath that he would not rest until his purpose was
achieved.

6-10: Then the people joyously brought the Ark to Sion. The
priests put on justice as a robe and loyal worshipers rejoiced
and prayed that David's act would be rewarded.

11-13: Through Nathan, the prophet, God then promised
that the Davidic house would rule forever; and that Sion would
be his favored dwelling-place.

14-18: The presence of God on Sion will bring great bless-
ings to every class in Israel. (In verse 17 the "horn" is an
allusion to the powerful Messiah, who was to give perpetuity
to the line of David.) The enemies of the Davidic house will
put on shame like a garment; while the crown of the Davidic
king shall be ever bright.

Reflection

Our Lord has made us members of his Mystical
Body, the Church. In that Body there are
various members with different functions. If
Christ has chosen you to be one of its nobler mem-
bers by giving you a call to the religious life, do not
refuse that grace.

Psalm

PSALM 132

132

Unity among Brethren

To Acquire the Spirit of Charity

The blessings of fraternal charity. It is a pleasure for men to dwell together in peace, harmony and mutual forbearance. It is like a precious ointment or a refreshing dew.

Brotherly unity:

- 1 Canticum ascensionum. David. A song of ascents by David.
vidis.

Ecce quam bonum et **B**ehold, how good and
quam jucundum,* ha- how pleasant it is for
bitare fratres in unum: brethren to dwell together
in unity:

Fraternal charity like sacred oil and dew.

- 2 Sicut óleum óptimum Like the precious oil upon
in cápite, quod défluit in the head, that ran down
barbam, barbam Aaron, upon the beard, the beard
* quod défluit in oram of Aaron, that ran down to
vestiménti ejus; the edge of his robe;
3 Sicut ros Hermon,* qui As the dew of Hermon
descéndit super mon- that descends upon Mount
tem Sion: Sion:
Nam illic largítur Dó- For there the Lord be-
minus benedictiónem, * stows the blessing, life for
vitam usque in sæculum. evermore.

Commentary

The psalmist compares the brotherly union of the people to the oil of priestly consecration. The harmony and peace of this brotherly union reminds the psalmist of the dew on Mount Hermon which descends with gentle blessing on the neighboring hills.

Reflection

In society we must associate with many people who have temperaments different from ours. There often is danger of friction and disagreement. If we remember this psalm, then our charity will bring peace and happiness.

PSALM 133

Psalm

Nocturnal Praises

133

A Prayer before Retiring

The sacred ministers who worship by night are exhorted to zeal and fervor in singing the praises of God. These in their turn bless the departing worshippers.

A call from the worshippers:

1 Canticum ascensionum. A song of ascents.

Ecce benedícite Dómino, * omnes servi Dómini; **B**ehold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord;

Qui statis in domo Dómini * horis noctúrnis. Who stand in the house of the Lord in the hours of the night.

Extóllite manus vestras ad sancta * et benedícite Dómino.— Lift up your hands toward the sanctuary and bless ye the Lord.

The response of the priests:

Ex Sion benedícat tibi Dóminus, * qui fecit cælum et terram. May the Lord bless thee out of Sion, he that made heaven and earth.

Commentary

De parting pilgrims (or ministers) exhort those about to take part in the night-watch in the Temple to praise the name of the Lord. To this exhortation the priests answer to departing worshippers with the blessing of God, the Creator of heaven and earth. (According to another interpretation: the psalmist exhorts those about to take part in the night-watch in the Temple to praise the name of the Lord. A priest pronounces a blessing on those about to begin the night service).

Reflection

Always remember our priests in your prayers that they may be worthy of their exalted calling. Christ prayed for them at the Last Supper: "I do not pray that thou take them out of the world, but that thou keep them from evil" (John 17, 15).

Psalm
134

PSALM 134
God's Praiseworthiness

To Recall God's Merciful Kindness

A call to praise God, for he is the absolute Lord of all and the special benefactor of Israel, as is evidenced from his wonders in Egypt and in the land of Chanaan.

A summons to praise God, who has chosen Israel as his own:

¹ Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Laudáte nomen Dómini; * laudáte, servi Dómini, Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise, ye servants of the Lord,

² Qui statis in domo Dómini, * in átriis domus Dei nostri. Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.

³ Laudáte Dóminum, quia bonus Dóminus; * psálite nómini ejus, quóniam suáve. Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing ye to his name, for it is sweet.

⁴ Nam Jacob elégit sibi Dóminus, * Israël in pecúlium suum.— For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel for his private property.

God's greatness in nature:

⁵ Novi équidem hoc: magnus est Dóminus, * et Dominátor noster præ omnibus diis. Verily I know this: the Lord is great, and our Ruler is above all gods.

⁶ Quæcúmque vult Dóminus, facit in cælo et in terra, * in mari et in omnibus profundis aquarum. Whatsoever the Lord pleases, he does in heaven and on earth, in the sea, and in all the deeps.

⁷ Addúcit nubes ab extrémis terræ, fulgúribus plúviam facit, * promittunt de receptáculis suis.— He brings clouds together from the end of the earth, with lightnings he make the rain, he sends forth the wind from his stores.

He delivered his people from Egypt:

338 Percússit primogénita He smote the firstborn of

Ægypti, * hómínes æque Egypt, men as well as *Psalms*
ac pecora. beasts.

Edidit signa et portén- He brought forth signs
ta in te, Ægypte, * in and miracles in thee, O
Pharaonem et in omnes Egypt, upon Pharao and
servos ejus. upon all his servants.

134

God gave them the Promised Land:

Percússit gentes mul- He smote many nations
tas * et occidit reges and slew mighty kings:
poténtes:

Sehon, regem Amor- Sehon, king of the Amor-
rhæorum, et Og, regem rhites, and Og, king of
Basan, * et omnes reges Basan, and all the kings of
Chánaan, Chanaan.

Et dedit terram eórum And he gave their land for
in possessionem, * in a possession, for a posses-
possessionem Israël pó- sion to Israel, his people.
pulo suo.

God, always the same, will protect his people:

Dómine, nomen tuum Thy name, O Lord, en-
in ætérnum manet, * dures for ever, thy memory,
Dómine, memória tua in O Lord, unto all genera-
generationem et gene- tions.
rationem.

Nam Dóminus tuétur For the Lord takes care of
populum suum, * et ser- his people, and has com-
vórum suórum miseré- passion on his servants.
tur.—

The gods of the heathen are powerless:

Idóla géntium argén- The idols of the nations
tum et aurum, * ópera are silver and gold, the
mánuum hómínium: works of men's hands:

Os habent, et non lo- They have a mouth, and
quúntur; * óculos ha- speak not; they have eyes,
bent, et non vident; and see not;

Aures habent et non They have ears, and hear
audiunt; * et non est not; and there is no breath
hálitus in ore eórum. in their mouth.

Símiles illis fiunt, qui Like unto them are they 339

Psalm 135 *fáciunt ea, * omnis qui that make them, every one
confidit in eis.— that trusts in them.*

Let all Israel praise God:

- 19 Domus Israël, benedícite Bless the Lord, O house of
cite Dómino: * domus Israel; bless the Lord, O
Aaron, benedícite Dó- house of Aaron
mino.
- 20 Domus Levi, benedícite Bless the Lord, O house of
Dómino; * qui cólitis Levi; O ye that fear the
Dóminum, benedícite Lord, bless the Lord.
Dómino.
- 21 Benedíctus Dóminus ex Blessed be the Lord out of
Sion, * qui hábitat in Sion, who dwells in Jeru
Jerúsalem. salem.

Commentary

People, priests, Levites, and proselytes are summoned to praise the Lord for having chosen Israel. The psalmist has no doubt of the Lord's transcendence, since he created the universe.

8-14: The striking down of the first-born of Egypt, and the overthrow of Canaan witness the great power of the Lord. These great deeds are imperishable reminders that the Lord will ever listen to his servants' appeal for justice.

15-18: Turning on the false gods, the psalmist derides them as lifeless images. He prays that their makers and worshipers will become like them.

19-21: Again the various classes of Israelites are called upon to praise the Lord who dwells in Jerusalem.

Reflection

The name of Jesus tells us of God's love for man—that he came on earth to save us. In the words of St. Bernard "the name of Jesus is music in the ear, honey in the mouth, gladness in the heart."

PSALM 135 A Litany of Praises

To Proclaim God's Mercy

Thanksgiving to God for his power and mercy. The Lord is to be praised for the benefits of creation, and the deliverance from Egypt, for the land of promise and the return from captivity.

A call to thank God:

Psalm
135

¹ Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Laudáte Dóminum, **P**raise ye the Lord, for he
quóniam bonus, * is good, for his mercy
quóniam in ætérnum endures forever.
misericórdia ejus.

Laudáte Deum deórum, Praise ye the God of gods,
* quóniam in ætérnum for his mercy endures for-
misericórdia ejus. ever.

² Laudáte Dóminum do- Praise ye the Lord of lords,
minórum, * quóniam in for his mercy endures for-
ætérnum misericórdia ever.
ejus.—

The wonders of creation:

⁴ Qui fecit mirabília ma- Who alone has done great
gna solus, * quóniam wonders, for his mercy en-
in ætérnum misericórdia dures forever.
ejus.

⁵ Qui fecit cælos cum Who with wisdom made
sapiéntia, * quóniam the heavens, for his mercy
in ætérnum misericórdia endures forever.
ejus.

⁶ Qui exténdit terram Who stretched out the
super aquas, * quóniam earth above the waters, for
in ætérnum misericórdia his mercy endures forever.
ejus.

⁷ Qui fecit lúmina ma- Who made the great
gna, * quóniam in ætér- lights, for his mercy en-
num misericórdia ejus: dures forever:

⁸ Solem, ut præsit diéi, * The sun, to rule the day,
quóniam in ætérnum for his mercy endures for-
misericórdia ejus, ever.

⁹ Lunam et stellas, ut The moon and the stars,
præsent nocti, * quón- to rule the night, for his
iam in ætérnum miseri- mercy endures forever.
córdia ejus.

God, the Deliverer of Israel:

¹⁰ Qui percússit Ægyptios Who smote the Egyptians.
in primogénitis eórum, * in their firstborn, for his

Psalm quóniam in ætérnum mercy endures forever.
135 misericórdia ejus.

Et edúxit Israël e mé- Who brought out Israel
dio eórum, * quóniam from their midst, for his
in ætérnum misericórdia mercy endures forever.
ejus,

12 Manu poténti et brác- With a mighty hand and
chio exténto, * quóniam an arm outstretched, for
in ætérnum misericórdia his mercy endures forever
ejus.

13 Qui divisit Mare Ru- Who divided the Red Sea
brum in partes, * quón- into parts, for his merc
iam in ætérnum miseri- endures forever.
córdia ejus.

14 Et tradúxit Israël per And led Israel across
médium ejus,* quóniam through its midst, for his
in ætérnum misericórdia mercy endures forever.
ejus.

15 Et detrúsit Pharaónem And cast Pharaoh and his
et exércitum ejus in Ma- army into the Red Sea, for
re Rubrum, * quóniam his mercy endures forever.
in ætérnum misericórdia
ejus.

God gave the Promised Land:

16 Qui duxit pópulum su- Who led his people
um per desértum, * through the desert, for his
quóniam in ætérnum mercy endures forever.
misericórdia ejus.

17 Qui percússit reges ma- Who smote great kings
gnos,* quóniam in ætér- for his mercy endures for
num misericórdia ejus. ever.

18 Et occídit reges potén- And slew mighty kings
tes, * quóniam in ætér- for his mercy endures for
num misericórdia ejus: ever:

19 Sehon, regem Amor- Sehon, king of the Amor
rhæórum, * quóniam in rhites, for his mercy en
ætérnum misericórdia dures forever.
ejus,

- 10 Et Og, regem Basan, * And Og, king of Basan, for *Psalm*
quoniam in ætérnum his mercy endures forever. **135**
misericórdia ejus,
11 Et dedit terram eórum And gave their land for a
in possessionem, * quón- possession, for his mercy
iam in ætérnum miseri- endures forever,
córdia ejus,
2 In possessionem Israë!, For a possession to Israel,
servo suo, * quóniam in his servant, for his mercy
ætérnum misericórdia endures forever.
ejus.—

Thanks to God:

- 3 Qui in humilitáte no- Who remembered us in
stra recordátus est no- our lowliness, for his mercy
stri, * quóniam in ætér- endures forever.
num misericórdia ejus.
4 Et liberávit nos ab ini- And delivered us from our
mícis nostris, * quóniam foes, for his mercy endures
in ætérnum misericórdia forever.
ejus.
5 Qui dat escam omni Who gives food to every
carni, * quóniam in creature, for his mercy en-
ætérnum misericórdia dures forever.
ejus.
6 Laudáte Deum cæli, Give praise to the God of
* quóniam in ætérnum heaven, for his mercy en-
misericórdia ejus. dures forever.

Commentary

In this psalm of thanksgiving each distich ends with the repeated refrain: "for his goodness is everlasting," indicating that it was sung as a litany in the Temple services.

1-9: The psalmist sings that the Lord is good and above all other gods. Then he praises the power of the Lord as shown in the creation of the world.

10-22: The Exodus from Egypt and the defeat of the Canaanite kings so that Israel might settle in their lands are proofs of the Lord's goodness.

23-26: So in all their afflictions the good Lord ever cared for his people, and so he provides for every creature. All men, then, should praise the God of Heaven and Lord of lords.

Psalm

Reflection

136 **W**e must be willing to accept the mysteries of God's providence concerning the world. As St. Paul told the Corinthians in his first epistle: "We see now through a mirror in an obscure manner, but then face to face" (13, 12).

PSALM 136

Fidelity in Exile

To Remain Faithful Even Though Afflicted

The psalmist recalls the mourning of the Israelite captives by the rivers of Babylon, and their indignation over the demand of their oppressors to sing to them a canticle of Zion.

The sacred music is silent in exile

- 1 **A**d flúmina Babylónis, **B**y the rivers of Babylon.
illic sédimus et flévimus, * cum recordáremur Sion. wept, when we remembered Sion.
- 2 In salícibus terræ illíus On the willows of that
* suspéndimus cítharas land we hung up our harps.
nostras.
- 3 Nam illic, qui abdúxerant nos, rogavérunt a carried us away asked
nobis cántica, et qui songs of us, and they that
affligébant nos, lætítiam: * "Cantáte nobis ex tormented us, gladness.
cánticis Sion!"—"Sing to us from the canticles of Sion!"

They can not sing on foreign soil, nor forget Jerusalem:

- 4 Quómo do cantábimus How shall we sing the song
cánticum Dómini * in of the Lord in a strange
terra aliéna? land?
- 5 Si oblítus ero tui, Jerúsalem, * oblivióni detur If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand be forgotten!
- 6 Adháreat lingua mea May my tongue cleave to
fáucibus meis, * si non the roof of my mouth if I
memínero tui, remember thee not,

Si non posúero Jerúsalem * super omnem lætitiam meam.— If I place not Jerusalem above all my joy!
Psalm 137

The denunciation of God's foes:

Recordáre, Dómine, contra filios Edom * diem Jerúsalem, Remember, O Lord, the day of Jerusalem against the sons of Edom,

Qui dixerunt: "Evértite, evértite * ipsa fundamenta in ea!" Who said: "Raze ye, raze ye the very foundations thereof!"

Fília Babylónis vastatrix, * beátus qui repéndet tibi mala quæ intulisti nobis! O daughter of Babylon, plundress, blessed be he that shall repay thee the evils which thou hast brought upon us!

Beátus qui apprehéndet et allidet * párvulos tuos ad petram! Blessed be he that shall seize and dash thy little ones against the rock!

Commentary

This anonymous psalm originates from the Babylonian exile. As the exiles sit in tears by one of the rivers of Babylon, their captives taunt them with the request that they sing some of their religious songs ("songs of Sion").

4-6: "How," cries the psalmist, "could the Israelites sing the songs of the Lord on heathen soil?" The psalmist prays that, if he should ever so forget Jerusalem, his right hand may lose its musical skill, and his tongue cleave to his palate.

7-9: He then calls upon the Lord to wreak terrible vengeance on Edom and Babylon for their share in the destruction of the Holy City.

Reflection

May God, the Almighty, lead us back from our captivity, so that returning from Babylon, that is from sin, we may sing a song of rejoicing in his divine embrace!

PSALM 137

Fervent Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving for Deliverance

Thanksgiving to God for his benefits. The heathen also will sing the praises of God when they shall have

Psalm
137

heard of his goodness and faithfulness toward his
chosen people.

Thanksgiving for God's mercy and fidelity:

¹ Davidis.

Of David.

Celebrábo te, Dómine,
ex toto corde meo, *
quia audísti verba oris
mei;

I will praise thee, O Lord,
with my whole heart, for
thou hast heard the words
of my mouth;

In conspéctu Angeló-
rum psallam tibi, *
² prostérnam me ad tem-
plum sanctum tuum,

I will sing praise to thee in
the sight of the angels, I
will worship toward thy
holy temple,

Et celebrábo nomen tu-
um * propter bonitátem
et fidem tuam,

And I will praise thy
name on account of thy
goodness and thy faithful-
ness,

Quia magnum fecísti
super ómnia * nomen tu-
um et promíssum tuum.

For thou hast magnified
thy name and thy promise
above all.

³ Quando te invocávi,
exaudísti me, * multi-
plicásti in ánima mea
robur.—

When I called upon thee,
thou didst hear me, thou
didst increase strength in
my soul.

The whole world will render homage to God:

⁴ Celebrábunt te, Dómi-
ne, omnes reges terræ, *
cum audierint verba oris
tui;

All the kings of the earth
shall praise thee, O Lord,
when they have heard the
words of thy mouth;

⁵ Et cantábunt vias Dó-
mini: * "Vere, magna
est glória Dómini."

And they shall sing of
the ways of the Lord: "In
truth, the glory of the Lord
is great."

⁶ Vere, excélsus est Dómi-
nus, et húmílem réspi-
cit, * supérbum autem
e longínquo contuétur.—

Truly exalted is the Lord,
and he looks on the lowly,
but the proud he regards
from afar.

Confidence in God:

346 Si ámbulo in médio tri-
bulatiónis, vivum me

If I shall walk in the midst
of tribulation, thou keepest

servas, contra iram ini- me living, thou stretchest *Psalm*
micórum meórum ex- forth thy hand against the
téndis manum tuam, * wrath of my enemies, thy **138**
salvum me facit dextera right hand saves me.
tua.

^s Dóminus pro me perfí- The Lord will perfect for
ciet cœpta. Dómine, bó- me what is begun. O Lord,
nitas tua in ætérnum thy goodness endures for-
manet; * ne dereliqueris ever; forsake not the work
opus mánuum tuárum. of thy hands.

Commentary

David (so the title) thanks God for having mercifully heard his prayer as he always does.

4-6: Even the foreign kings should thank the Lord, acknowledging his glory. The Lord's standards are above those of men, for he looks favorably upon the humble and stands aloof from the proud.

7-8: So, encompassed by foes, the psalmist counts on the Lord's gracious and constant help. For he never forgets any of his creatures.

Reflection

Repeat frequently the act of consecration to the Sacred Heart. It closes with the words: "Make the earth resound from pole to pole with one cry: Praise to the Divine Heart that wrought our salvation; to it be glory and honor forever. Amen."

PSALM 138

God's Omnipresence

A Prayer Realizing God's Power and Omniscience.

The omniscience and omnipresence of God: no thought of man's heart is hidden from God, and there is no place, howsoever remote, where a man can flee from God.

God knows all things:

¹ Magistro chori. Davidis. For the choir-master. A psalm of David.

Dómine, scrutáris me **L**ord, thou searchest me
et novísti, * tu no- and knowest me, thou
vísti me, cum sédeo et knowest me, when I sit
cum surgo. down and when I rise up.

Psalm Intelligis cogitationes Thou discernest my
138 meas e longinquo; „ cum thoughts from afar; when
 ambulo et cum recum- I walk and when I lie down
 bo, tu perspicias, * et thou dost behold, and thou
 ad omnes vias meas ad- givest heed to all my ways
 vertis.

4 Cum verbum nondum When a word is not yet on
 est super linguam me- my tongue: behold, O Lord
 am: * ecce, Domine, jam thou knowest all.
 nosti totum.

5 A tergo et a fronte com- From behind and from be-
 plécteris me, * et ponis fore thou dost understand
 super me manum tuam. me, and thou layest thy
 hand upon me.

6 Nimis mirabilis est mi- This knowledge is too
 hi scientia hæc, * subli- wonderful and sublime for
 mis: non capio eam.— me: I cannot grasp it.

God is everywhere:

7 Quo ábeam procul a Whither may I go from
 spiritu tuo? * et quo a thy spirit, or whither may I
 facie tua fugiam? flee from thy face?

8 Si ascendam in cælum, If I ascend into heaven
 illic es; * si apud inferos thou art there; if I lie down
 me sternam, ades. with the dead, thou art
 present.

9 Si sumam pennas au- If I lay hold of the wings
 roræ, * si hábitem in of the dawn, if I dwell in
 término maris: the farthest part of the sea

10 Etiam illic manus tua Even there shall thy hand
 ducet me, * et tenébit lead me, and thy right
 me dextera tua. hand shall hold me.

11 Si dicam: “Ténebræ If I say: “At least dark-
 saltem opérient me, * et ness shall cover me, and
 nox instar lucis circúm- night like the light shall
 dabit me:” surround me:”

348 Ipsæ ténebræ non erunt Darkness itself shall not
 obscuræ tibi, et nox sic- be dark to thee, and night

ut dies lucébit: * calígo shall be light as the day: *Psalms*
est tibi sicut lux. to thee the darkness is like light. **138**

The Creator knows man perfectly:

Tu enim formásti renes For thou didst fashion my
meos, * texuisti me in reins, thou hast made me
utero matris meæ. in my mother's womb.

Laudo te, quod tam I praise thee, because I am
mirífice factus sum, * so wonderfully made, be-
quod mirabilia sunt ópe- cause thy works are won-
ra tua. derful.

Et ánimam meam no- And thou knowest my
vísti perfecte, * ¹⁵ non soul perfectly, my sub-
látuit te substántia mea, stance was not hidden from
thee,

Quando in occúlto for- When I was being formed
inábar, * quando texébar in secret, when I was being
in profúndis terræ. made in the depths of the
earth.

Actus meos vidérunt Thine eyes saw my acts,
óculi tui, et in libro tuo and all were written in thy
scripti sunt omnes; * book; days were fixed be-
dies sunt defíniti, priús- fore there was even one of
quam esset vel unus ex them.
eis.

Mihi autem quam ár- But to me how difficult are
dua sunt consília tua, thy thoughts, O God, how
Deus, * quam ingens great is the sum of them!
summa eórum!

Si dinúmerem ea, plu- If I count them, they out-
ra sunt quam aréna; * number the sand; if I
si pervénerim ad finem, should reach the end, I am
adhuc sum tecum.— still with thee.

A prayer against the malice of the wicked:

Utinam occidas ímpi- Would that thou wouldst
um, Deus, * et viri sán- slay the wicked man. O
guinum recédant a me! God, and that men of blood
would depart from me!

Psalm Nam rebéllant contra For they rebel against
 138 te dolóse, * pérfide se thee deceitfully, in treach-
 éfferunt hostes tui. ery thy foes exalt them-
 selves.

- 21 Nonne, qui odérunt te, Do I not hate, O Lord,
 Dómine, eos ódio hábeo, them that have hated thee,
 * qui insúrgunt in te, am I not weary of them
 sunt mihi tædio? that assail thee?
- 22 Perfécto ódio odi eos; I hate them with a perfect
 * inimíci facti sunt hatred; they are become
 mihi.— enemies to me.
- 23 Scrutáre me, Deus, et Search me, O God, and
 cognósce cor meum; * know my heart; try me
 proba me, et cognósce and know my thoughts,
 sensa mea,
- 24 Et vide, num via prava And see, whether I follow
 incédam, * et deduc me an evil way, and lead me by
 via antíqua. the ancient way.

Commentary

The Lord knows every action of the psalmist's (David, according to the title) life. It is as if he has winnowed his very thoughts. The extent of God's knowledge is unfathomable to the psalmist.

7-12: The Lord is omnipresent. Whether one goes to the heights of the heavens or the depths of the underworld or to the ends of the earth, he is there. Even the deepest darkness cannot obscure his vision.

13-16: The psalmist then cries out in wonder at the mystery of his own creation, when God decided even before his birth what his life-span should be.

17-18: The psalmist confesses that he cannot comprehend the infinite knowledge of the Lord, any more than he can count the sands of the seashore.

19-24: A part of all this mystery is the prosperity of sinners. The psalmist, however, shuns them; for, being enemies of the Lord, they are his enemies also. He asks the Lord to test his sincerity and to lead him on the way of his forefathers.

Reflection

350 **I**t will be a great help to us in time of temptation if we recall that God is everywhere, and that he knows our most secret thoughts and desires.

PSALM 139

Psalm
139

Against Wicked Plots

For Those Suffering from Malicious Tongues

The psalmist prays to be delivered from calumnious enemies bent upon his destruction. They lay traps for him, but his hope is in the Lord, who will nullify their wicked plans.

The title of the psalm:

Magistro chori. Psalmus. For the choir-master. A psalm of David.

The enemies of the psalmist and their plots:

Eripe me, Dómine, ab **R**escue me, O Lord, from
homine malo, * a vi- the evil man, guard me
ro violento custódi me: from the violent man:

Ab iis qui cógitant ma- From them that devise
la in corde, * omni die evils in their heart, every
éxcitant lites, day they stir up strife,

Acuunt linguas suas ut They sharpen their
serpens: * venénium áspi- tongues like a serpent: the
dum sub lábiis eórum.— venom of asps is under
their lips.

Salva me, Dómine, e Save me, O Lord, from the
mánibus iníqui, * a viro hands of the wicked man,
violénto custódi me: guard me from the violent
man:

Qui cógitant evértere Who plan to overturn my
gressus meos, * „supér- steps, the proud hide a
bi abscondunt láqueum snare for me,
mihi,

Et funes exténdunt ut And they stretch cords
rete, * juxta viam ten- like a net, they lay traps
diculas cóllocant mihi. for me along the way.

Dico Dómino: Deus I say to the Lord: thou art
meus es tu; * ausculta, my God; hearken, O Lord,
Domine, vocem obsecra- to the voice of my plead-
tiónis meæ. ing.

Domine, Deus, potens O Lord, O God, my mighty
auxilium meum! * te- help! Thou coverest my
gis caput meum die head in the day of battle.
pugnæ.—

Psalm A prayer that the Lord help him, and punish his foes:

- 139** Ne concésseris, Dómine, Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked man, desidéria iníqui, * noli implére consilia ejus. fulfill not his plans.
- Extóllunt ¹⁰ caput qui They that encompass me me circúmdant: * malítia labiórú eórú malice of their lips over- óbruat eos. whelm them.
- 11** Pluat super eos carbó- May he rain burning coals nes ignítos; * in fóveam upon them; may he cast deíciat eos, ne resúr- them into the pit, to rise no- rant.— more.

Confidence in divine justice:

- 12** Vir linguæ malæ non The man of evil tongue durábit in terra; * virum shall not endure on the violéntum repén- te cápi- earth; misfortunes shall- ent mala. fall suddenly upon the violent man.
- 13** Novi Dóminum jus réd- I know that the Lord dere egéno, * justítiam avenges the needy, and pro- paupéribus. cures justice for the poor.
- 14** Profécto justí celebrá- In truth, the just shall- bunt nomen tuum, * praise thy name, the up- recti habitábunt in con- right shall dwell in thy- spectu tuo. sight.

Commentary

David (so the title) prays to be delivered from warlike enemies, whose tongues are as deadly as a serpent's fangs in their attempts to harm him. The Lord, his mighty helper, will shield him; for he prays that the plans of his enemies may be frustrated, and that he will not be abandoned.

9-14: May destruction come down on the heads of his enemies—the very destruction they plot against him—as coals of fire. The psalmist is sure that the Lord's justice will avenge the poor. That is why the just praise him and live in happy security.

Reflection

352 **G**od can always frustrate the most carefully laid plans of the ungodly, and in a moment overthrow his strength.

PSALM 140

Psalm
140

Against Contamination

For Avoiding the Occasions of Sin

Prayer to be guarded against dealing with the wicked. The psalmist turns to God for refuge against their snares. He accepts with patience the reprimands of the just.

A plea to be kept from evil:

Psalmus. Davidis.

A psalm of David.

Dómine, clamo ad te: **I** cry unto thee, O Lord:
cito succurre mihi; * help me quickly; hark-
ausculta vocem meam, en to my voice, when I cry
cum ad te clamo. unto thee.

Dirigátur ad te orátio Let my prayer arise like
mea sicut incénsum, * incense unto thee, let the
elátio mánuum meárum lifting up of my hands be
ut sacrificium vesperti- like the evening sacrifice.
num.—

Pone, Dómine, custó- Set a watch, O Lord, be-
diam ad os meum, * ex fore my mouth, a guard at
cúbias ad óstium labi- the door of my lips.
orum meórum.

Ne inclináveris cor me- Incline not my heart to an
um ad rem malam, * evil thing, to the doing of
ad ímpie patrándá faci- wicked deeds;
nora;

Neque cum viris iníqua And with men that do evil,
agéntibus * vescar un- let me never feed on their
quam lautis cibus eórum. choice foods.

Better to be rebuked by the just than to be flattered by sinners:

Percútiát me justus: Let the just man smite
hæc pietas est; * incre- me: this is a kindness; let
pet me: óleum est cápi- him upbraid me: it is oil
tis. for the head,

Quod non recusábit ca- Which my head shall not
put meum, * sed semper refuse, but I will always
orábo sub malis eórum. pray under their evil do-
ings.

- Psalm* 140 Demissi sunt juxta pe- Their princes were cast
 140 tram principes eorum, et down by the rock, and they
 audiérunt, * quam lenia heard, how mild my words
 essent verba mea. were.
 7 Ut cum terram quis As when one plows and
 sulcat et findit, * sparsa cleaves the earth, their
 sunt ossa eorum ad fau- bones were scattered at the
 ces inférni.— jaws of Sheol.

An appeal in urgent need:

- 8 Nam ad te, Dómine De- For to thee, O Lord God,
 us, convertúntur óculi my eyes are turned; unto
 mei; * ad te confúgio: thee I flee for refuge: de-
 ne perdideris ánimam stroy not my soul.
 meam.
 9 Custódi me a láqueo, Keep me from the trap
 quem posuérunt mihi, * which they have set for me,
 et a tendículis agéntium and from the snares of evil-
 iníqua. doers.
 10 Cadant in rétia sua ím- Let the wicked fall to-
 pii simul, * dum ego gether into their own nets,
 salvus evádam. while I escape unhurt.

Commentary

David (the psalmist here, according to the title) asks that his cry be heard and that his prayers rise to heaven as the smoke of incense, and as a sacrifice.

3-7: The psalmist prays to be saved from the utterance of evil words, and the doing of evil deeds. He will have no part with the luxuries of sinful men. A rebuke from a good man is kinder than the blandishments of sinners. So the psalmist prays against the wicked so that, after being humiliated, they will listen eagerly to his words (verse 6 is obscure in the Hebrew and Vulgate).

8-10: Conscious of threatening death, the psalmist looks trustingly to the Lord. He prays that he may escape the traps set by wicked men while they themselves fall into them.

Reflection

Christ gave us the law of Christian charity: "But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you" (Matt. 5, 44).

PSALM 141

Psalm
141

Prayer in Abandonment

For Those Suffering Great Anguish

Prayer of one persecuted and friendless. Although he is suffering most grievous afflictions and is abandoned by all, yet God will not fail to come to his rescue in reward for his trust.

The title of the psalm:

Davidis, cum esset in caverna. Precatio.

A maskil of David, when he was in the cave. A prayer.

A prayer to God, who knows his loneliness:

Voce magna ad Dóminum clamo, * voce magna Dóminum óbsecro. **I** cry to the Lord with a loud voice, with a loud voice I beseech the Lord.

Effúndo coram eo sollicitúdiuem meam, * angústiam meam coram ipso pando. **I** pour forth my anxiety before him, and in his presence I declare my distress.

Cum anxiátur in me spiritus meus, * tu novisti viam meam.— **W**hen my spirit is troubled within me, thou knowest my way.

In via qua incédo, * abscondérunt láqueum mihi. **I**n the path wherein I walk, they have laid a trap for me.

Respício ad dextram et video, * et non est, qui de me curet. **I** look to the right and see, and there is none that takes care of me.

Non est, quo fúgiam, * non est, qui prospiciat vitæ meæ.— **T**here is no place where I may flee, there is no one that cares for my soul.

All hope in the Lord:

Clamo ad te, Dómine; dico: Tu es refúgium meum, * pórtio mea in terra vivéntium. **I** cry unto thee, O Lord; I say: thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

Atténde ad clamórem meum, * quia miser factus sum valde. **G**ive heed to my plaint, for I am become very wretched.

Psalm Eripe me a persecúen- Rescue me from my per-
 142 tibus me, * quia me for- secutors, because they are
 tióres sunt. stronger than I.

8 De cárcere educ me, * Bring me out of prison,
 ut grátias agam nómini that I may give thanks to
 tuo. thy name.

Justi circúmdabunt me, The just will throng round
 * cum bene féceris mihi. me, because thou hast
 dealt bountifully with me.

Commentary

The psalmist (David according to the title) cries out to the Lord. He prays while his heart is sinking with despondency. But the Lord knows his plight and the traps men set for him.

5-6: He has cast vainly about for a protector. Finding none, he places his hope in the Lord.

7-8: God must listen to his cry and save him from enemies who are too powerful. Led out of his imprisonment, the psalmist will praise and thank God and the upright will rejoice with him.

Reflection

What consoling words St. Paul uttered in his epistle to the Romans: "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come" (8, 18).

PSALM '142

Penitent in Distress

To Obtain Guidance from God

Prayer of a penitent seeking divine aid in great distress. He is inspired with a holy thirst for God through the contemplation of his past favors. He desires, henceforth, to do his will.

An appeal for mercy:

¹ Psalmus, Davidis.

A psalm of David.

Dómine, audi oratió-
 nem meam, pérci-
 pe obsecratióem meam
 pro fidelitáte tua, * ex-
 áudi me pro tua justítia.

Hear, O Lord, my prayer,
 give ear to my pleading
 according to thy faithful-
 ness, hear me according to
 thy justice.

356 Ne vocáveris in judíci- Call not thy servant unto

um servum tuum, * quia judgment, for in thy sight *Psalm*
 nemo vivens justus est no man living is just.
 coram te.—

142

The sad condition of the psalmist:

Nam inimicus persé- For the enemy persecutes
 quitur ánimam meam: my soul: he has cast my
 prostrávit in terram vi- life down to the earth, he
 tam meam, * collocávit has thrust me into dark-
 me in ténebris sicut pri- ness like those who died
 dem defúntos. long ago.

Et defécit in me spíri- And my spirit has failed
 tus meus; * intra me within me; my heart has
 obriguit cor meum. become frozen within me.

The remembrance of God's past blessings:

Mémini diérum anti- I remember the days of
 quorum, méditor de óm- old, I muse on all thy works,
 nibus opéribus tuis, * I consider the deeds of thy
 facta mánuum tuárum hands.
 perpéndo.

Expándo manus meas I stretch forth my hands
 ad te; * ánima mea, ut unto thee; my soul, like a
 terra árida, te sitit.— parched land, thirsts for
 thee.

A prayer for speedy help, and the destruction of his enemies:

Velóciter exáudi me, Hear me speedily, O Lord:
 Dómine: * nam defícit for my spirit fails.
 spiritus meus.

Noli abseóndere fáciem Hide not thy face from
 tuam a me, * ne símilis me, lest I be like unto them
 fiam descendéntibus in that go down into the pit.
 foveam.

Fac cito percípíam grá- Let me feel thy loving-
 tiam tuam, * quia in te kindness quickly, for I
 confido. trust in thee.

Notum fac mihi, qua Make the way known to
 via incédam, * quia ad te me wherein I should walk,
 attóllo ánimam meam. for unto thee I lift up my
 soul.

Psalm Eripe me de inimícis Rescue me from my ene-
 142 meis, Dómine: * in te mies, O Lord: I hope in
 spero.— thee.

- 10 Doce me fácere volun- Teach me to do thy will,
 tátam tuam, * quia tu for thou art my God.
 es Deus meus.

Spirítus tuus bonus Thy spirit is good: let it
 est: * ducat me in terra lead me in a level land.
 plana.

- 11 Propter nomen tuum, For thy name's sake, O
 Dómine, vivum me ser- Lord, keep me living; ac-
 va; * pro cleméntia tua cording to thy kindness
 educ de angústiiis áni- bring my soul out of dis-
 mam meam. tress.

- 12 Et pro grátia tua dé- And according to thy
 strue inimícos meos, et loving-kindness destroy my
 perde omnes qui tribu- foes, and slay all them that
 lant ánimam meam: * afflict my soul: for I am
 nam ego sum servus thy servant.
 tuus.

Commentary

The psalmist (according to the title, David) harassed by enemies and conscious of his own unworthiness before God, begs in his dereliction that his prayer may be heard.

3-6: He describes the persecutions of his enemies and his sadness. But the recollection of God's mercies in the past gives the psalmist hope. As the parched soil thirsts for rain, so does his soul thirst for God.

7-9: The psalmist's peril is acute; he will die unless the Lord quickly shows his mercy. He adds a prayer for moral guidance and again cries out for deliverance.

10-12: The psalmist continues the prayer for instruction and guidance along the path of truth. God, in delivering the psalmist from his foes, will vindicate his own name. As servant of God he can call down divine wrath on his enemies.

Reflection

The world is evil, and "all who want to live piously in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But the wicked and impostors will go from bad to worse, erring and leading into error" (2 Tim. 3:12-13).

PSALM 143

Song of Victory

A Prayer in Time of Trouble

Psalm
143

Song of victory, and a prophecy of the messianic blessings. The king marvels at the merciful providence of God towards man so lowly and so unworthy. He confidently implores new blessings for himself and the people.

Thanksgiving for past victory:

Davidis.

Of David.

<p>Benedictus Dóminus, Petra mea, * qui do- cet manus meas prœlium, dígitos meos bellum,</p>	<p>Blessed be the Lord, my Rock, who teaches my hands battle, my fingers war,</p>
<p>Misericórdia mea et arx mea, * præsídium me- um et liberátor meus,</p>	<p>My mercy and my strong- hold, my defense and my deliverer,</p>
<p>Clípeus meus et refú- gium meum, * qui sub- dit pópulos mihi.—</p>	<p>My shield and my refuge, who subjects the peoples to me.</p>

Praise of God's loving care:

<p>Dómine, quid est homo, quod curas de eo, * fílius hóminis, quod de eo có- gitas?</p>	<p>O Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst take care of him, the son of man, that thou shouldst take thought for him?</p>
<p>Homo símilis est flátui auræ, * dies ejus umbræ, quæ transit.</p>	<p>Man is like unto a breath of air, his days like unto a shadow that passes away.</p>

A prayer for future victory:

<p>Dómine, inclína cælos tuos et descénde, * tange montes et fumábunt;</p>	<p>Lord, bow down thy heav- ens and descend, touch the mountains and they shall smoke;</p>
<p>Fúlmina fulmen et dis- pérge eos, * emítte sa- gittas tuas et contúrba eos;</p>	<p>Flash forth the lightning and scatter them, send forth thy arrows and trou- ble them;</p>

- Psalms* 143 Pòrrige manum tuam Stretch forth thy hand
de alto, * éripe me et from on high, rescue me
libéra me ex aquis mul- and deliver me from man-
tis, e manu alienigená- waters, from the hand
rum, strangers,
8 Quorum os mendácium Whose mouth speaks
lóquitur * et dextera lie, and whose right hand
jurat falsum. swears falsely.

A promise of thanks; repetition of prayer:

- 9 Deus, cánticum novum To thee, O God, I will si-
cantábo tibi, * psal a new song, on the te-
tério decachórdo psal- stringed psaltery I will p-
lam tibi, to thee,
10 Qui das victóriam régi- Who givest victory
bus, * qui eripuísti Da- kings, who didst rescue
vid, servum tuum. David, thy servant.
A gládio malo 11 éripe From the evil sword re-
me, * et libéra me e- cue me, and deliver me
manu alienigenárum, from the hand of stran-
Quorum os mendácium Whose mouth speaks
lóquitur, * et dextera lie, and whose right hand
jurat falsum.— swears falsely.

The picture of peace under the Messias:

- 12 Fílii nostri símiles sint May our sons be like green
plantis, * crescéntes in twigs, growing in the
adulescéntia sua; youth;
Fíliæ nostræ quasi co- Our daughters like corn-
lumnæ anguláres, * pillars, sculptured like pil-
sculptæ ut columnæ lars of the temple.
13 Hórrea nostra sint ple- May our storehouses
na, * copíosa ómnibus full, overflowing with
frúctibus; fruits;
Oves nostræ, mílies May our flocks, a thou-
fecúndæ, in myriádas sand times fruitful, be-
augeántur in campis creased to myriads in the
nostris; * 14 juménta fields; may our beasts
nostra sint onústa. burden be laden.

Ne sit ruptúra mœnium May there be no breach in *Psalm*
aut exsílium, * neve the wall nor going forth in **144**
planctus in plateís no- to exile, and no wailing in
stris. our streets.

Beátus pópulus cui sunt Blessed the people that
tália; * beátus pópulus, have such things; blessed
cujus Deus est Dóminus. the people whose God is the
Lord.

Commentary

David (the title ascribes this psalm to him) attributes his victory in battle to the Lord's direction and help.

3-8: He expresses amazement that God should even take notice of so transient a creature as man. He then begs for further divine aid against treacherous and lying enemies.

9-11: Confident that his prayer will be heard, David, the musician, promises an instrumental hymn of thanksgiving, and then repeats the prayer of verses 7 and 8.

12-15: The psalmist (the verses seem messianic) describes three great blessings to come: strong and beautiful children, abundance of grain and cattle, and civic peace. The song closes with a reflection on the happiness of those whose God is the Lord.

Reflection

One of the most effective means for the prevention of sin is the thought of death. "In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin" (Ecclesiasticus 7, 40).

PSALM 144

God's Great Goodness

To Obtain Zeal for God's Glory

All men should praise God because of his magnificent perfections: his unsearchable greatness, goodness, justice, mercy, kindness, faithfulness, and special providential care of those who fear him.

God's goodness and greatness manifested in creation:

Laudes. Davidis.

Praises of David.

Prædicábo te, Deus **I** will extol thee, O my
meus, rex; * et be- God, O king; and I will
nedicam nómini tuo in bless thy name for ever and
sæculum sæculi. ever.

Psalm Omni die benedícam Every day I will bless thee,
 144 tibi, * et laudábo nomen and I will praise thy name
 tuum in sæculum sæ- for ever and ever.
 culi.

3 Magnus est Dóminus Great is the Lord and
 et laudábilis valde, * ne- greatly to be praised, and
 que explorári potest ma- his greatness is unsearch-
 gnitúdo ejus. able.

4 Generátio generatióni Generation to generation
 prædicat ópera tua, * et praises thy works, and they
 annúntiant poténtiam declare thy power.
 tuam.

5 Glóriam magnificam They speak of the magni-
 majestátis tuæ loquún- ficient glory of thy majesty,
 tur, * et mirabilia tua and they make known thy
 pervúlgant. wondrous works.

6 Et poténtiam terribí- And they tell the might of
 lium óperum tuórum di- thy terrible deeds, and de-
 cunt, * et magnitúdinem clare thy greatness.
 tuam enárrant.

7 Laudem magnæ boni- They proclaim the praise
 tátis tuæ proclámant, * of thy great goodness, and
 et de justítia tua exsúl- rejoice in thy justice.
 tant.

8 Clemens et miséricors The Lord is gracious and
 est Dóminus, * tardus ad merciful, slow to anger and
 iram et grátia multæ. of great loving-kindness.

An exhortation to praise God:

9 Bonus est Dóminus uni- The Lord is good to all,
 vèrsis, * et miséricors and merciful toward all his
 erga ómnia ópera sua. works.

10 Célebrent te, Dómine, Let all thy works praise
 ómnia ópera tua, * et thee, O Lord, and let thy
 sancti tui benedícant holy ones bless thee.
 tibi.

11 Glóriam regni tui di- Let them speak of the
 cant, * et poténtiam glory of thy kingdom, and
 tuam loquántur, tell of thy power,

362 Ut notam fácient fíliis To make thy might known

hóminum poténtiam tu- to the sons of men and the *Psalm*
am * et glóriam magni- glory of thy magnificent **144**
fici regni tui. kingdom.

Confidence that God will protect his loyal worshipers:

Regnum tuum regnum Thy kingdom is a king-
ómnium sæculórum,* et dom of all the ages, and thy
dominatio tua manet per dominion endures through
universas generatiónes. all generations.

Fidélis Dóminus in óm- The Lord is faithful in all
nibus verbis suis, * et his words, and holy in all
sanctus in ómnibus opé- his works.
ribus suis.

Dóminus sústinet om- The Lord upholds all that
nes qui cadunt,* et éri- fall, and raises up all that
git omnes depréssos. are weighed down.

Oculi ómnium in te The eyes of all hope in
sperant,* et tu das illis thee, and thou givest them
escam témpore suo. food in its season.

Tu áperis manum tu- Thou openest thy hand
am,* et sáticas cum be- and with benevolence dost
nevoléntia omne vivens. satisfy every living thing.

Justus est Dóminus in The Lord is just in all his
ómnibus viis suis,* et ways, and holy in all his
sanctus in ómnibus opé- works.
ribus suis.

Prope est Dóminus óm- The Lord is near to all
nibus invocántibus eum, that call upon him, to all
* ómnibus invocántibus that call upon him sincere-
eum sincére. ly.

Voluntátem timéntium He will fulfill the will of
se faciet,* et clamórem them that fear him, and he
eórum áudiet, et salvá- will hear their cry, and save
bit eos. them.

Custódit Dóminus om- The Lord keeps all them
nes qui diligunt eum * that love him, and all the
et omnes iníquos dispér- wicked he will destroy.
det.

Laudem Dómini loquá- May my mouth speak the
tur os meum,* et omnis praise of the Lord, and may **363**

Psalm caro benedicat nómini all flesh bless his holy name
 145 sancto ejus in sæculum for ever and ever.
 sæculi.

Commentary

This "Praise-Song" of David (so the title) is an alphabetic psalm. The psalmist will daily glorify God. For he is mighty and great beyond measure. Generation upon generation will proclaim his might and marvelous deeds. But they shall also be mindful of his mercy-tempered justice.

8-12: The Lord is gracious, good, and merciful. So all his deeds make known his glory, and his faithful subjects bless him and publish the glory of his kingdom.

13-21: That Kingdom is everlasting (13b is not found in the Hebrew text.) The Lord is faithful; he helps those in distress and enriches the poor with plentiful harvests. Whoever comes to him reverently and confidently will not go away unaided. In union with all men the psalmist will lift up his song of praise.

Reflection

Inspiring are the words of the author of the book of Wisdom: "For thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made: for thou didst not appoint, or make anything hating it" (11, 25).

PSALM 145

Our Divine Helper

Against Overconfidence in One's Strength

Praise of God the Creator, Helper of everyone, eternal King. The psalmist exhorts all to put their trust, not in man, but in God; for he is all powerful and good, especially towards the needy and oppressed.

The title of the psalm:

1 Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Only in God can Israel trust:

Lauda, ánima mea, Dóminum;
 2 laudábo Dóminum in vita mea; *
 psallam Deo meo quám-diū ero.—

Praise the Lord, O my soul; in my life I will praise the Lord; I will sing to my God as long as I shall be.

3 Nólite confidere in princípibus, * in hómine, per quem non est salus.

Put not your trust in princes, in man, through whom there is no salvation.

Cum exierit spírítus When his breath departs, *Psalm*
 ejus, revertétur in ter- he shall return to his clay; **145**
 ram suam; * tunc then all his plans shall
 peribunt ómnia consília perish.
 ejus.—

Bcátus, cujus adjútor Blessed is he whose helper
 est Deus Jacob, * cujus is the God of Jacob, whose
 spes in Dómino, Deo suo. hope is in the Lord, his God,

Qui fecit cælum et ter- Who made heaven and
 ram, * mare, et ómnia earth, the sea, and all the
 quæ in eis sunt, things that are in them,

God's faithfulness:

Qui servat fidem in Who keeps faith for ever,
 ætérnum, ⁊ reddit jus who renders justice to the
 opprèssis, * panem dat oppressed, gives bread to
 esuriéntibus. the hungry.

Dóminus solvit captí- The Lord releases the cap-
 vos, * Dóminus áperit tives, the Lord opens the
 óculos cæcórum. eyes of the blind.

Dóminus érigit curvá- The Lord raises up them
 tos, * Dóminus diligit that are bowed down, the
 justos. Lord loves the just.

Dóminus custódit pere- The Lord watches over
 grinos, pupillum et ví- strangers, he supports the
 duam susténtat, * viam orphan and the widow, but
 autem peccatórum per- the way of sinners he con-
 turbat. founds.

God rules forever:

Regnábít Dóminus in The Lord shall reign for
 ætérnum, * Deus tuus, ever, thy God, O Sion, unto
 Sion, in generatióem et generation and generation.
 generatióem. Alleluia.

Commentary

The psalmist (anonymous in the Hebrew) promises life-long praise of God. He does not put his trust in powerful men; they are too ephemeral.

5-10: All sure hope is in the Lord, the Creator of the Universe. For he is faithful. He cares for the just who are oppressed and afflicted, and frustrates the plans of the wicked—this King who reigns forever.

Psalm

146

Reflection

This psalm teaches us to rely on God, on his power and goodness; and not to trust in men and the transitory things of this world.

PSALM 146

His Power and Goodness

For Those Who Have Received Special Favors

Thanksgiving to God, who has brought Israel back from exile and is rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. Let Israel praise God also for his beneficent providence towards all his creatures.

Praise to God, Restorer of Israel, Sovereign of the world:

¹ Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Laudáte Dóminum, quia bonus est, * psállite Deo nostro, quia suávis est: decet eum laudátio.

Praise ye the Lord, for he is good, sing ye to our God, for he is sweet: praise is becoming to him.

² Ædificat Jerúsalem Dóminus, * dispérsos Israël cóngregat;

The Lord builds up Jerusalem, he gathers together the dispersed of Israel:

³ Ipse sanat fractos corde, * et álligat vúlnera eórum.

He heals the broken hearted, and binds up their wounds.

⁴ Defínit númerum stelarum, * singulas nómine vocat.

He fixes the number of the stars, he calls each one by its name.

⁵ Magnus Dóminus noster et víribus potens, * sapiéntiæ ejus non est mensúra.

Great is our Lord and mighty in his strength, his wisdom there is no measure.

⁶ Súblevat húmiles Dóminus; * ímpios depímit usque ad terram.—

The Lord lifts up the lowly; he brings the wicked down even to the ground.

Praise of God's providence:

⁷ Cantáte Dómino cum gratiárum actióne, * psállite cíthara Deo nostro,

Sing ye to the Lord with thanksgiving, give praise to our God upon the harp.

Qui cælum óperit núbibus, * qui plúviam terræ parat; Who covers the heavens with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth; *Psalm* **147**

Qui producit in móntibus gramen, * et herbam, ut sérviat hómini; Who makes grass to grow on the mountains, and herbage to serve man;

Qui dat jumentis escam eórum, * pullis corvórum, qui clamant ad eum. Who gives to the cattle their food, to the young ravens that cry to him.

Non robur equi deléctat eum, * nec crura viri placent ei. He delights not in the strength of the horse, nor does he take pleasure in the legs of a man.

Placent Dómino, qui timent eum, * qui fidunt in bonitáte ejus. The Lord's delight is in them that fear him, who put their trust in his goodness.

Commentary

The returning exiles are here called upon to praise God who is rebuilding their beloved city and mending their broken hearts. There are no limits to his power and wisdom. The meek find in him vindication; the wicked, quick chastisement.

7-11: The psalmist again summons the people to praise a provident God who has blessed them abundantly. Even beasts of the field and helpless birds of the air enjoy his protection. But men who proudly trust in military might are objects of his displeasure. Humble trust alone will ensure divine favor.

Reflection

Let us never cease praising God, whose greatness parallels his tenderness, whose strength equals his mercy!

PSALM 147

Blessings upon Israel

To Share in the Peace of the Church

Praise of God, Israel's benefactor. She is grateful for her return from exile, for the restoration of the Holy City, for the blessings of peace and prosperity and especially of divine revelation.

Psalm

God's blessings to Jerusalem:

- 147** **L**auda, Jerúsalem, Dómi- **P**raise the Lord, O Jeru-
num, * lauda Deum salem, praise thy God,
tuum, Sion, O Sion,
13 Quod firmávit seras Because he has strength-
portárum tuárum, * be- ened the bolts of thy gates,
nedíxit filiis tuis in te. he has blessed thy children
within thee.
14 Compósuit fines tuos He has made peace in thy
in pace, * medúlla tritici borders, with the marrow
sátiat te. of wheat he fills thee.

The God of nature has given Israel glorious privileges:

- 15** Emíttit elóquium suum He sends forth his word
in terram, * velóciter upon the earth, his com-
currit verbum ejus. mand runs swiftly.
16 Dat nivem sicut lanam, He gives snow like wool
* pruínam sicut cíne- he scatters hoar-frost like
rem spargit. ashes.
17 Próicit gláciem suam He throws out his ice like
ut frústula panis; * co- crumbs of bread; waters be-
ram frígore ejus aquæ come stiff before his cold.
rigescunt.
18 Emíttit verbum suum He sends forth his word
et liquefácit eas; * flare and melts them; he bids his
jubet ventum suum et wind to blow, and the
fluunt aquæ. waters flow.
19 Annuntiávit verbum He declared his word to
suum Jacob, * statúta et Jacob, his laws and decrees
præcépta sua Israël. to Israel.
20 Non fecit ita ulli natió- He has not done in like
ni: * præcépta sua non manner to any nation, his
manifestávit eis. decrees he has not made
manifest to them. Alleluia.

Commentary

In the Hebrew text this psalm is joined to the 146th. For the security of Jerusalem the Lord is to be praised. Children are happy in the city which the Lord has fortified and blessed with peace and abundance.

15-18: The God of Israel blankets the earth with snow, and at his word waters turn to ice. But with the same ease winter

vanishes at the word of God. (So also has the Lord acted with *Psalm* Israel.)

19-20: He has enriched Israel through the revelation of his Law, a favor which makes Israel unique among nations. **148**

Reflection

God is great and glorious as our Creator, but greater and more glorious is he as our Saviour. With everlasting kindness he has shown infinite mercy to us.

PSALM 148

The Work of Praise

To Praise God through His Works

All creatures are invited to praise God, their Creator. The heavens and their innumerable hosts, the earth and all that dwell therein, are summoned to join in a chorus of praise to him who has given them being.

Praise from the heavens and all they contain.

Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Laudáte Dóminum de Praise ye the Lord from
cælis, * laudáte eum the heavens, praise ye
in excelsis. him in the high places.

Laudáte eum, omnes Praise ye him, all his
Angeli ejus, * laudáte angels, praise ye him, all
eum, omnes exércitus his hosts.
ejus.

Laudáte eum, sol et luna, * laudáte eum, omnes stellæ lucéntes. Praise ye him, O sun and moon, praise him, all ye shining stars.

Laudáte eum, cæli cælórum, * et aquæ quæ super cælos sunt: Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that are above the heavens:

Laudent nomen Dómini, * nam ipse jussit et creáta sunt, Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created,

Et státuit ea in ætérnum, in sáculum: * Et he established them for ever and ever: he gave
præcéptum dedit, quod a decree, which shall not
non transíbit.— pass away.

Psalm

Let the earth and everything therein praise God:

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- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Laudate Dóminum de
terra, * cete et ómnia
profúnda maris.</p> <p>8 Ignis et grando, nix et
nébula, * ventus procél-
læ, qui facit verbum ejus,</p> <p>9 Montes et omnes colles,
* árbores frugíferæ et
omnes cedri,</p> <p>10 Feræ et ómnia jumén-
ta, * reptilia et vólucres
pennátæ,</p> <p>11 Reges terræ et omnes
pópuli, * príncipes et
omnes júdices terræ,</p> <p>12 Júvenes et étiam vírgi-
nes, * senes, una cum
púeris:</p> <p>13 Laudent nomen Dómi-
ni, * quia excélsum est
nomen ejus solius;</p> | <p>Praise the Lord from the
earth, ye sea-monsters and
all ye depths of the sea,</p> <p>Fire and hail, snow and
mist, stormy wind, that ful-
fils his word,</p> <p>Mountains and all hill.
fruitful trees and all cedar.</p> <p>Beasts and all cattle, ser-
pents and feathered fowl</p> <p>Kings of the earth and all
people, princes and all
judges of the earth.</p> <p>Young men and even
maidens, old men, together
with children:</p> <p>Let them praise the name
of the Lord, for his name
alone is exalted;</p> |
|---|---|

Israel's special reason for praise:

<p>Majestas ejus súperat terram et cælum, * altum tríbuit cornu pó- pulo suo.</p>	<p>His majesty is above earth and heaven, and he has raised up a horn for his people.</p>
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<p>Laus est ómnibus san- ctis ejus, * fíliis Israël, pópulo qui propínquus est ei.</p>	<p>He is the praise of all his saints, of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Alleluia.</p>
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Commentary

All the heavenly host of angels are commanded to sing the glory of the Lord. The sun, moon, and stars, should join the hymn to their Creator. For, at his mere word, all creatures came into being and were given immutable laws to guide them.

7-14: Descending to earth, the psalmist invites all nature, animate and inanimate, to join in the praise of their Creator.

All men, of every state and age, must add their voices to the chorus. For his majesty surpasses that of all creation, and he

has given strength to his people (so the sense of "lifted up the horn" in verse 14). This is the hymn of praise for the faithful Israelites, the Lord's people. *Psalm*

149

Reflection

Every created thing has its place in the universe according to God's decree. Man has been made and put in the world in order to know, love and serve his Creator, and then to be happy with him for all eternity in heaven.

PSALM 149

Past and Future Triumph

For Those Who Have Received God's Blessings

Hymn of triumph over heathen foes. The people are exhorted to look forward to the final victory of God's kingdom in the messianic times, when every good Israelite should be ready to fight for the Lord!

Let Israel rejoice over their triumph:

Alleluja.

Cantáte Dómino cánticum novum; * laus ejus sonet in cœtu sanctórum.

Lætétur Israël de factóre suo, * fílii Sion exsúltent de rege suo.

Laudent nomen ejus choro, * týmpano et cíthara psallant ei,

Quia Dóminus diligit pópulum suum, * et húmiles victória ornat.

Exsúltent sancti de glória, * læténtur in cubílibus suis.—

Alleluia.

Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle; let his praise ring out in the gathering of the saints.

Let Israel be joyful in her maker, let the children of Sion rejoice in their king.

Let them praise his name in the dance, let them play to him with timbrel and harp,

For the Lord loves his people, and he adorns the humble with victory.

Let the saints rejoice in glory, let them be glad on their beds.

Future triumph over all nations:

Præcónia Dei sint in gútture córum, * et glá- in their throat, and two-

- Psalm* dii ancípites in mánibus edged swords in their
eórum: hands:
150 Ut fáciant vindíctam in To execute vengeance up-
géntibus, * castigatiónes on the nations, chastise-
in pópulis; ments upon the peoples.
8 Ut álligent reges eórum To bind their kings with
compédibus, * et nóbiles fetters, and their nobles
eórum mánicis férreis; with manacles of iron.
9 Ut fáciant de eis judi- To execute upon them the
cium præstitútum: * hoc appointed judgment: such
glória est ómnibus san- an honor have all hi
ctis ejus. Allelúja. saints. Alleluia.

Commentary

In festal song and dance Israel should rejoice in the triumph given by the Lord their King.
6-9: But while rejoicing and praising the Lord, they must hold the avenging sword in their hand, to be ready to take vengeance on their foes and fetter hostile kings who are doomed by God. The honor and glory of Israel will be the execution of this decree of God.

Reflection

“The weak things of the world has God chosen to put to shame the strong” (1 Cor. 1. 27).
When he founded his Church, poor, lowly fishermen were made his apostles. Follow Christ who is meek and humble of heart.

PSALM 150

Symphony of Praise

Fervent Acts of Prayer

The great Alleluia. All creatures of heaven and earth and of the deep are summoned to extol the power, grandeur and infinite perfections of God.

Reasons for praise:

1 Alleluja.

Alleluia.

Laudáte Dóminum in **P**raise ye the Lord in hu
sanctuário ejus. * sanctuary, praise him
laudáte eum in augústo in his august firmament.
firmaménto ejus.
372 Laudáte eum propter Praise ye him for his

grándia ópera ejus,* lau- mighty acts, praise ye him *Psalm*
 dáte eum propter sum- for his supreme majesty. **150**
 mam majestátem ejus.

Mode of praise:

Laudáte eum clangóre Praise him with sound of
 tubæ, * laudáte eum trumpet, praise him with
 psaltério et cithara. psaltery and harp.

Laudáte eum týmpano Praise him with timbrel
 et choro, * laudáte eum and dance, praise him with
 chordis et órgano. stringed-instruments and
 organ.

Laudáte eum cýmbalis Praise him with resound-
 sonóris, laudáte eum ing cymbals, praise him
 cýmbalis crepitántibus: with crashing cymbals: let
 * omne quod spirat, lau- everything that breathes
 det Dóminum! Allelúja. praise the Lord! Alleluia.

Commentary

In an exultant summons to song, the psalmist calls upon all living creatures to join in a symphony of praise. They are told to glorify God of heaven for his great works and his boundless goodness. (This psalm serves as a doxology for the closing of the whole Psalter.)

Reflection

Let the noble sentiments of the psalms be always in your hearts! Write them in the entry and on the door of your heart. For they tell you that God is love.



Purpose of Canticles

The Canticles in Christian Worship

Like the Psalms, the Canticles are hymns of praise and thanksgiving; and, being equally parts of Holy Scripture, they too are received by the Church as writings inspired by God. Hence they have an ancient place with the Psalms in Catholic worship, and the two groups stand interwoven in the Breviary. Thus the newly authorized Psalter includes a revised version of these other inspired hymns, prepared with equal diligence and under the same Apostolic authority.

In the present volume, more adapted to private prayer, the Canticles form a separate group, since they are not among the Psalms in Holy Scripture. There they occur in other biblical books, which tell us the occasion when each Canticle was uttered for the first time. They never formed, as did the Psalter, a collection for public use in the Temple or the synagogues, but only in the keeping of the Church. In the following pages each Canticle carries a notation of its original place in Scripture. Successively these references cover a long extent of sacred history. We find the Canticles beginning with the great lawgiver, Moses, and following at intervals through the Old Testament to a time very near to that of Christ, while the last three, taken from the New Testament, celebrate his actual coming. Here in fact, they reach their climax in the very hymn 375

of the Incarnation, the "Magnificat" of the Virgin Mother.

This segregation of the Canticles is not without its own value. Their exalted theme, the Being and attributes of God, remaining steadfast in its doctrine through a dozen centuries, reflects a changeless revelation of truth. The same God whose bounties Anna (1 Sam. 2, 1-10) praises in almost the language of warlike victory, is glorified by Mary (Luke 1, 46-55) as triumphant through spiritual power, while to both inspired singers he is One in the majesty of holiness, truth and love, with ever the same eternal purpose. Thus the Canticles identify the God who declared himself to ancient Israel with him who, "when the fullness of time came" (Gal. 4, 4), revealed the same adorable Self in the visible form of our human nature.

WILLIAM H. MCCLELLAN, S. J.

CANTICLE OF MOSES

Exod. 15, 1-18

Song of Victory

Cant.
Moses

In Remembrance of the Graces of Baptism

Immediately after the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea, the Hebrews sang this canticle composed by Moses. It describes the victory over the Egyptians with its consequences.

Theme of the canticle: victory of the Red Sea:

Tunc Moyses et filii Israël,
cecinerunt hoc carmen Domino
et dixerunt:

Then Moses and the children
of Israel sang this canticle to
the Lord and said:

Cantábo Dómino, quia
excélsus, excélsus est:
equum et currum de-
jécit in mare.

I will sing to the Lord, for
he is indeed the Most
High: the horse and the
chariot he has thrown into
the sea.

Robur meum, et forti-
tudo mea Dóminus, * et
factus est mihi salvátor.

The Lord is my strength
and my courage, and he
has become my Saviour.

Hic est Deus meus, et
prædicábo eum; * Deus
patris mei, et laudábo
eum.—

He is my God and I will
proclaim him; the God of
my father, and I will praise
him.

Dóminus bellátor est: *
Dóminus nomen ejus.

The Lord is a warrior: the
Lord is his name.

Currus Pharaónis et
exercitum ejus projécit
in mare, * et duces ejus
elécti demérsi sunt in
Mari Rubro.

Pharao's chariots and his
army he has cast into the
sea; and his chosen leaders
are drowned in the Red
Sea.

Fluctus operuérunt eos;
* descendérunt in pro-
fundum ut lapis. —

The waves have covered
them; they are sunk to the
bottom like a stone.

God showed his power in destroying the Egyptian army:

Déxtera tua, Dómine,
qui excéllis poténtia, *
déxtera tua, Dómine,
percússit inimicum.

Thy right hand, O Lord,
who excellest in power; thy
right hand, O Lord, has
slain the enemy.

Et summa majestáte

And in thy supreme ma-

- Cant.* tua destruxísti adversá- jesty thou hast destroyed
Moses rios tuos; * misísti iram thy adversaries: thou hast
tuam, quæ eos devorávit sent thy wrath, which has
ut stípulam. devoured them like stubble.
- 8 Et flatu furóris tui coa- And with the blast of thy
cervátæ sunt aquæ, ste- fury the waters were gath-
térunt ut agger fluénta, ered together, the running
* coaguláti sunt fluctus waters stood like a ram-
in médio mari.— part, the waves were cur-
dled in the midst of the sea
- 9 Dixit inimícus: Pérse- The enemy said: I will
quar, cápiam, * dívidam pursue, I will overtake, I
spólia, satiábitur furor will divide the spoils, my
meus, fury shall have its fill,
Evaginábo gládium me- I will draw my sword, my
um, * spoliábit eos man- hand shall despoil them.
- 10 Flavísti vento tuo: opé- Thou didst blow with thy
ruit eos mare; * submér- wind: the sea covered
si sunt ut plumbum in them: they sunk like lead
aquis veheméntibus.— in the mighty waters.

God is praised for his goodness:

- 11 Quis tibi par inter deos, Who is equal to thee
Dómine, quis tibi par, among the gods, O Lord,
qui excéllis sanctitáte, * who is equal to thee, who
veneránde præcónio, mi- dost excel in holiness, ven-
rabília patrans? erable in praise, doing
wonders?
- 12 Extendísti déxteram tu- Thou didst stretch forth
am: * devorávit eos terra. thy hand: the earth swal-
lowed them.
- 13 Duxísti grátia tua pó- In thy love thou hast led
pulum quem redemísti; the people whom thou hast
* duxísti eum poténtia redeemed; in thy power
tua ad habitáculum san- thou hast led them to thy
ctum tuum.— holy habitation.

Glorious results of this victory in the future:

- 378 Audiérunt pópuli, tre- The peoples heard, they
muérunt: * íncolas Phi- trembled: fear struck the

listææ corripuit pavor. inhabitants of Philistæa. *Cant.*
Tunc perterriti sunt Then were the princes of *Moses*
principes Edom, * duces Edom affrighted, tremb-
Moab corripuit tremor; ling struck the leaders of
Moab;

Contabuérunt omnes All the inhabitants of
habitatóres Chánaan, * Chanaan wasted away, fear
irruit super eos formído and dread fell upon them.
et horror.

Propter fortitúdinem Because of the might of
bracchii tui * obrigué- thy arm they became stiff
runt ut lapis, like a stone,

Donec pertránsiit pó- Until thy people passed
pulus tuus, Dómine, * by, O Lord, until the people,
donec pertránsiit pópu- whom thou hast acquired,
lus, quem acquisisti.— passed by.

Introduxisti eos et plan- Thou hast brought them
tasti eos in monte pos- in and hast planted them
sessiónis tuæ, in loco on the mountain of thy
quem ad habitándum possession, in the place
parásti, Dómine, * in san- which thou hast prepared
ctuário, Dómine, quod for a habitation, O Lord, in
fundárunť manus tuæ. thy sanctuary, O Lord,
which thy hands have
founded.

Dóminus regnábít * in The Lord shall reign for
ætérnum et semper. ever and ever.

Commentary

This is a hymn of triumph, commemorating the successful escape of the Israelites from the Egyptians by the miraculous crossing through the Red Sea. Moses praises the power of God, who is pictured as a warrior rescuing the Israelites from the Egyptian army. He describes in vivid language how the Lord trapped and overthrew the might of Egypt in the Red Sea.

11-13. The Lord is revealed as holy and wonderful above all the gods by the power he showed in thus saving his people and leading them into the Holy Land.

14-18 All the neighboring nations, hearing of the Lord's wonderful protection of his people, will be helpless in their fear of Israel. So God's people will pass through their lands and settle in the holy place which the Lord has chosen for them—this Lord who reigns forever.

Cant.

Reflection

Moses

We should approach God in the deepest humility when we reflect on the words of v. 11 in this psalm. Although our Creator excels in holiness, yet he does not cease doing wonderful things for us.

CANTICLE OF MOSES

Deut. 32, 1-43

God's Fidelity

Against Becoming Unfaithful

The Hebrews in the Promised Land; their ingratitude towards a beneficent and faithful God, and his chastisements. A resumé of the history of the Hebrews is contained in this poem.

Moses bids heaven and earth as witness to the truth:

- 1 **A**uscultáte, cæli, et loquar; * et terra audiát verba oris mei. **H**earken, O ye heaven and I will speak; and let the earth hear the word of my mouth.
- 2 Descéndat ut plúvia doctrína mea; * stillet ut ros elóquium meum, Sicut imber super herbam, * et sicut plúvia super gramen. Let my doctrine descend as the rain, let my speech distil as the dew, As a shower upon the herb, and as rain upon the grass.
- 3 Etenim nomen Dómini prædicábo: * tribúite glóriam Deo nostro. For I will proclaim the name of the Lord: give ye glory to our God.

The fidelity of God and the faithlessness of the people:

- 4 Petra est: perfécta sunt ópera ejus; * nam omnes viæ ejus sunt justæ. Deus fidélis est et absque iniquitáte: * justus et rectus. He is a rock: his works are perfect; for all his ways are just. God is faithful and without iniquity, he is just and right.
- 5 Male egérunt in eum filii degéneres, * generátio prava atque pervérsa. Degenerate children have done evil towards him, a wicked and perverse generation.

The many favors of God to Israel:

Cant.

Hæccine retribúitis Dó- Is this the return thou
mino, * pópule stulte et givest to the Lord, O fool-
insipiens? ish and senseless people?

Nonne ipse est pater Is he not thy father, that
tuus, qui creávit te, * has created thee; hast he
nonne ipse te fecit et not made thee and estab-
córdidit?—lished thee?

Meménto diérum anti- Remember the days of old;
quórum, * perpéndite consider the years of all the
annos ómnium genera- generations.
tiónum:

Intérroga patrem tu- Ask thy father and he will
um, et indicábit tibi, * declare to thee; thy elders,
senes tuos, et dicent tibi: and they will tell thee:

Quando Altíssimus gén- When the Most High as-
tibus assignávit terras, signed lands to the nations,
* quando divisit fílios when he divided the sons of
Adam, Adam,

Státuit téminos pópulis * secúndum núme- He set the borders for the
rum filiórum Israël; peoples according to the
number of the children of
Israel;

Pars enim Dómini est For the Lord's portion is
pópulus ejus, * Jacob his people, Jacob the lot of
sors hereditária ejus. his inheritance.

Invenit eum in terra He found him in a desert
desérta, * in loco incúlto, land, in a place untilled, in
in ululátu solitúdinis. a howling wilderness.

Fovit eum et atténdit He assisted him and gave
ad eum, * custodívit heed to him, he guarded
eum ut pupíllam óculi him as the apple of his eye.
sui.

Sicut áquila éxcitat ni- As the eagle stirs up her
dum suum, * vólitat su- nest, and hovers over her
per pullos suos, young,

Ita expándit alas suas So he spread his wings
et tulit eum, * portávit and bore him, he carried
eum super pennas suas. him on his wings.

Cant. Dóminus solus duxit The Lord alone led him,
Moses eum, * neque ullus erat and there was no strange
cum eo deus aliénus. god with him.

13 Vexit eum super excél- He bore him above the
sa terræ, * cibávit eum high places of the earth, he
provéntu agrórum. fed him with the crops of
the fields.

Sugéndum dedit ei mel He gave him honey to suck
de petra, * oleúmque de out of the rock, and oil out
saxo duríssimo; of the hardest stone:

14 Butýrum arménti et lac Butter of the herd and
óvium * cum ádipe agnó- milk of the sheep with the
rum et arietum, fat of lambs and of rams,

Tauros Basan et hircos The bulls of Basan and
cum ádipe opímo fru- the goats, with the fat mar-
ménti, * et sánguinem row of the wheat, and you
uvæ bibísti, vinum ge- drank of the blood of the
nerósum.— grape, an excellent wine.

The ingratitude of the Hebrews:

Manducávit Jacob et Jacob ate and was filled,
satiátus est, 15 pinguis the beloved grew fat and
factus est diléctus et kicked: thou grewest fat,
recalcitrávit: * pinguis swollen, gross.
factus est, saginátus,
obésus.

Derelíquit Deum, factó- He forsook God, his maker,
rem suum, * et despéxit and he despised the rock of
petram salútis suæ. his salvation.

16 Provocavérunt eum di- They provoked him by
is aliénis, * abominatió- strange gods, they made
nibus irritavérunt eum. him angry with abomina-
tions.

17 Immolavérunt dæmó- They sacrificed to devils,
niis, qui non sunt dii, * who are not gods, to gods
diis quos ignoráverant, whom they knew not,

Novis qui recens vené- To new gods who were
runt, * quos non colúe- newly come up, whom your
rant patres vestri. fathers had not worshiped.

382 Petram, quæ génuít te, Thou hast neglected the

neglexísti, * et oblítus rock that begot thee, and *Cant.*
es Dei factóris tui.— hast forgotten God thy *Moses*
maker.

The Lord utters his decree of vengeance:

Et vidit Dóminus et And the Lord saw and
fastidívit, * irritátus a spurned, being angered by
filiis et filiábus suis. his own sons and daugh-
ters.

Et ait: Abscóndam fá- And he said: I will hide my
ciem meam ab eis; * face from them; I will see
vidébo quis futúrus sit what shall be their end;
finis eórum;

Generátio enim pervér- For they are a perverse
sa sunt, * filii in quibus generation, children in
nulla est fides. whom there is no faithful-
ness.

Ipsi provocavérunt me They have provoked me
eo qui non est deus, * with that which is not god,
irritavérunt me vanis they have angered me with
idólis suis: their empty idols:

Ego autem provocábo But I will provoke them by
illos eo qui non est pó- that which is not a people,
pulus, * gente stulta I will vex them with a fool-
irritábo eos. ish nation.

Nam ignis accénsus est For a fire is kindled by my
ab ira mea, * et ardébit wrath, and shall burn even
usque ad ima inférni, to the lowest hell,

Et vorábit terram et And it shall devour the
fructus ejus, * et món- earth and its fruits, and
tium fundaménta com- shall burn the foundations
búret. of the mountains.

Accumulábo eis mala I will heap on them evils
super mala, * omnes sa- upon evils, I will send all
gíttas meas mittam in my arrows against them.
eos.

Lassabúntur fame et They shall be consumed
vorabúntur febri * et with famine, and shall be
peste amára. devoured by fever and by a
bitter plague.

Cant. Et dentes bestiárum And I will send the teeth
Moses immittam in eos, * cum of beasts upon them, with
venéno reptántium in the poison of things that
terra. creep upon the ground.

25 Foris absúmet gládus Without shall the sword
* et in conclávis pavor slay and in the chamber
terror,

Júvenem simul et vír- Both the young man and
ginem, * lacténtem cum the virgin, the sucking
hómine sene.— child with the man in
years.

26 Dixíssem: “Dispérdam I would have said: “I will
eos; * delébo ex homínibus scatter them; I will blot out
memóriam eórum,” their memory from among
men,”

27 Nisi jactántiam timé- Were it not that I dreaded
rem inimíci, * ne pér- the enemy’s boasting, lest
peram intelligérent ho- their foes should misunder-
stes eórum, stand

Ne dicerent: “Manus And should say: “Our
nostra præváluit; * non hand has prevailed; the
Dóminus hæc ómnia fe- Lord did not do these
cit.” things.”

28 Nam gens absque con- For they are a nation
silio sunt, * et sensus without counsel, and there
non est in eis. is no understanding in
them.

29 Si sapiéntes essent, in- If they were wise, they
telligérent hæc, * attén- would understand these
derent quis futúrus sit things, they would mind
finis ipsórum: what would be their end:

30 Quómodo unus persé- How does one man pursue
quitur mille, * et duo a thousand, and two chase
fugant decem mília? ten thousand?

Nonne quia Deus eórum Is it not because their God
véndidit eos, * et Dómi- has sold them, and the
nus trádidit eos? Lord has delivered them
up?

Neque enim similis est Deo nostro deus eórum: * et ipsi inimíci nostri sunt testes. For their god is not like our God: and our enemies themselves are the witnesses. *Cant. Moses*

Profecto de vite Sodomorum provenit vitis eórum, * et de campis Gomórrhæ; Of a truth, their vine springs from the vine of Sodom, and from the plains of Gomorrhæ;

Uvæ eórum sunt uvæ venenátæ, * racemos habent amáros. Their grapes are poisoned grapes, they have bitter clusters.

Venenum draconum est vinum eórum, * et virus serpéntium dirum. Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the awful venom of serpents.

Execution of the decree:

Nonne hæc apud me asservántur, * obsignáta in thesáuris meis? Are not these things guarded by me, sealed up in my treasures?

Mea erit ultio atque vindicta, * quo die vacilábunt pedes eórum. Vengeance shall be mine and punishment also, in the day when their feet shall stumble.

Nam prope est dies interitus eórum, * et sors mala eórum propinquat.— For the day of their destruction is at hand, and their evil destiny draws near.

Nam Dóminus tuébitur jus pópuli sui, * et miserébitur servórum suórum. For the Lord will guard the right of his people, and will have pity on his servants.

Quando vidébit lassárianum, * et deficere servos et líberos, When he sees their hand grow weary, and servants and freemen become weak,

Dicet: Ubi sunt díi eórum, * petra, ad quam confugerunt? He will say: Where are their gods, the rock to which they fled for refuge?

Qui manducábant adipem sacrificiórum eó- Who ate the fat of their sacrifices and drank the

Cant. rum, * bibébant vinum wine poured forth by
Moses libátum ab eis? them?

Surgant, et opituléntur Let them arise and help
vobis, * et protectióni you, and be a protection
sint vobis. unto you.

39 Vidéte nunc: ego, égo- Behold now: I, it is I my
mon est sum, * et præter me self, and there is no God be
net est Deus; sides me;

Ego occído, et vitam re- I kill, and I restore life. I
stitúo, percútio, et ego strike, and I heal; and no
sano; * neque quisquam one will deliver out of my
salvábít e manu mea.— hand.

40 Profécito ad cælum at- In very truth I lift my
tóllo manum meam, * et hand to heaven, and I say
dico: "Ego in ætérnum "I shall live for ever:
vivam:

41 Cum acúero fulmen When I shall whet the
gládii mei, * et ad judí- lightning of my sword, and
cium se accínxerit ma- my hand shall arm itself
nus mea, for judgment,

Reddam ultiónem ad- I will render vengeance to
versáriis meis, * et re- my enemies, and will repay
tribúam eis, qui me odé- them that hate me.
runt.

42 Sáanguine inebriábo sa- I will make my arrow
gittas meas, * et gládus drunk with blood, and my
meus vorábit carnes, sword shall devour flesh.

De sáanguine occisórum Of the blood of the slain
et captivórum, * de and of the captives, of the
cápíte ducum inimicó- head of the leaders of the
rum." enemies."

43 Exsultáte, gentes, de Rejoice, ye nations, be
pópulo ejus: * quia vind- cause of his people, for he
dicábit sáanguinem ser- will avenge the blood of his
vórum suórum, servants.

Et ultiónem reddet ad- And he will render venge
versáriis suis, * et ex- ance to his adversaries and
piábit terram suam et he will make amends for
pópulum suum. his land and his people.

Commentary

*Cant.
Anna*

Moses, speaking at God's command (see Deut. 31, 16-21), tells the people to hearken to his praises of the Lord's perfect justice towards an unfaithful and ungrateful nation.

7-14. He then describes in detail God's goodness to Israel—how God chose the Israelites and tenderly protected them in the Exodus to the fertile land of Chanaan, which he gave them.

15-18. But the people, forgetful of God in their prosperity, have turned away from him to sin and idolatry.

19-25. So God will, in his turn, abandon them and their land to destruction at the hands of their enemies.

26-39: God will, however, force the enemy nations to acknowledge that their triumph over Israel was by God's will. For he will save a remnant of Israel from destruction. Through this remnant he will lead Israel back to fidelity to the true God and their only protector.

40-43. God swears that he will destroy the pride of all nations that oppose him and give the nations that serve him cause for rejoicing.

Reflection

Even as the Israelites of old, we too shall meet with God's vengeance if we continue to spurn his many favors towards us.

CANTICLE OF ANNA

1 Kings (Samuel) 2, 1-10

The Humble Exalted

For Perseverance in Meekness

Anna composed this canticle in thanksgiving after the birth of her son Samuel. It expresses deep confidence in God, and ends with a prophecy about the coming of the Messiah.

Theme of the canticle:

¹ Et Anna oravit et dixit: And Anna prayed and said:

Exsultat cor meum in **M**y heart rejoices in the
Dómino; * extóllitur **L**ord, and my horn is
cornu meum in Deo meo, lifted up in my God.

Late aperitur os meum My mouth is opened wide
contra inimícos meos, * against my enemies, be-

Cant. quia gaudeo de auxilio cause I rejoice in thy help
Anna tuo.—

God's holiness, power, infinite knowledge:

2 Non est sanctus par There is no holy one equal
Dómino; * neque enim to the Lord, for there is no
álius est extra te, neque other besides thee, and no
petra símilis Deo nostro. rock like unto our God.

3 Nolíte multa loqui su- Do not multiply proud
pérbe, * neque insoléntia talk, nor let insolence
pródeat ex ore vestro. come forth from your
mouth.

Quia Deus sciéntiæ est For the Lord is a God of
Dóminus, * et ab ipso knowledge; and by him ac-
ponderántur actióes. tions are weighed.

4 Arcus fórtium confrin- The bows of the mighty
gúntur, * débiles autem are broken, but the weak
cingúntur róbores. are girt with strength.

5 Sáturi pro pane se lo- They that are full hire
cant, * famélici vero a themselves out for bread,
labóre cessant. but the hungry cease to
labor.

Stérilis parit sépties, * She that is barren bears
et multórum parens lan- seven times, but she that
guéscit.— has many children grows
weak.

6 Dóminus dat mortem The Lord gives death and
et vitam, * dedúcit ad life, he brings down to hell
íferos et redúcit. and brings back again.

7 Dóminus páuperem fa- The Lord makes poor and
cit et ditat, * húmílem makes rich, he makes a
reddit et excélsu, man humble and he makes
him exalted.

8 Erigit e púlvere egé- He raises up the needy
num, * et páuperem e from the dust, and lifts the
stércore attóllit, poor man out of the dung-
hill,

388 Ut det ei sedem inter So that he may give him

príncipes, * et sólium a seat among princes, and *Cant.*
gloriæ tribuat ei. grant him a throne of *Anna*
glory.

Dómini enim sunt co- For the pillars of the earth
lúmnae terræ, * et super are the Lord's, and upon
eas pósuit orbem. them he has set the world.

Expression of confidence in God:

Gressus sanctórum su- He keeps the feet of his
órum custódit, * ímpii saints, but the wicked per-
autem in ténebris pér- ish in the darkness.
eunt.

Neque enim róbre suo For a man is not strong by
fortis est vir: * ₁₀ Dómi- his own strength: the Lord
nus confrínget adversá- shall crush his adversaries.
rios suos.—

Excélsus in cælis toná- Exalted above them he
bit; * Dóminus judicábit shall thunder in the heav-
fines terræ; ens; the Lord shall judge
the ends of the earth;

Et dabit poténtiam Re- And he shall give power to
gi suo,* et extóllet cornu his King, and shall exalt
Uncti sui. the horn of his anointed.

Commentary

This beautiful song is similar in thought to the "Magnificat" of Our Lady, as it is also similar in occasion. For Anna sings in thanksgiving for the miraculous conception and birth of her son.

Anna first lifts up her voice in rejoicing at God's great goodness to her.

2-9. No god can equal the Lord. He knows and weighs the words and actions of the proud. He destroys the strong; he gives strength to the weak. He is master of life and death. He exalts the humble to the rank of princes. His holy ones are safe, while sinners perish. In the Lord alone is strength.

10 The Lord is master and judge of the earth and protector of his anointed King.

Reflection

This holy woman is a model of constancy in prayer. Several traits from this canticle are to be found in the Magnificat of Mary.

Cant.
David

CANTICLE OF DAVID

1 Par. 29, 10-13

Song of Gratitude

Giving Glory to God Alone

Hymn of praise uttered in the last days of David. Everything belongs to God: all things in heaven and on earth are his. He is exalted above all, and by his dominion he rules all things.

God governs everything, and is above all.

- 10 Et David Dominum coram And David praised the Lord
toto cœtu laudavit et dixit: before the whole assembly and
said:

Benedictus es, Dómine, **B**lessed art thou, O Lord,
Deus Israël patris God of Israel our father,
nostri, * ab ætérno in from eternity to eternity.
ætérnum.

- 11 Tibi est, Dómine, ma- Thine, O Lord, is magnifi-
gnificéntia et poténtia,* cence and power, and
et splendor et glória et splendor and glory and ma-
majéstas. jesty.

Cuncta enim, quæ in For all things that are in
cælo sunt et in terra, heaven and on earth are
tua sunt: * tuum, Dómi- thine: thine is the king-
ne, regnum et princeps dom, O Lord, and thine is
qui éminet super omnes. the ruler who is exalted
above all.

- 12 Divítiae et honor sunt Riches and honor are
a te, * et tuo império from thee, and by thy do-
ómnia regis. minion thou rulest all
things.

Et in manu tua robur And in thy hand is
et poténtia,* et in manu strength and power; and in
tua, magnificáre et fir- thy hand it is to make great
máre ómnia. and to give strength unto
all.

- 13 Nunc igitur, Deus no- Now therefore, our God,
ster, celebrámus te * et we honor thee and we
laudámus nomen tuum praise thy glorious name.

Commentary

Cant.

The aged King David praises the Lord before the assembled people. *Tobias*

The Lord of Israel is worthy of praise, because of his power and majesty. He is King and Lord of the universe. All royal power comes from him. Because of this, King David and the people must praise him.

Reflection

Let us be always generous in almsgiving, knowing that everything we have comes from God.

CANTICLE OF TOBIAS

Tob. 13, 2-9

God's Dealings Justified

For Whole-hearted Conversion to God

Thanksgiving to God for his favors after the archangel Raphael had revealed himself to Tobias and his son. The canticle also contains a prophecy about the glorious future of Jerusalem.

Praise of God, who is eternal and omnipotent:

Benedictus Deus qui **B**lessed be God who lives
vivit in ætérnum, * **B**for all eternity, and his
et in perpétuum manet kingdom endures forever.
regnum ejus.

Nam ipse flagéllat, et For he scourges and he
miserétur, dedúcit ad has pity, he leads down to
íferos, et redúcit; * hell and brings back again;
neque quisquam éffugit nor is there anyone that
manum ejus.— escapes his hand.

The captive Israelites are invited to praise God:

Celebráte eum, filii Is- Honor him, ye children of
raël. coram géntibus: * Israel, in the presence of
nam ipse dispérsit nos the heathen: for he has
inter illas. scattered us among them.

Osténdite illic magni- Show there his greatness:
túdinem ejus, * laudes utter his praises before all
dicite ejus coram ómni- the living.
bus vivéntibus.

Cant. Ipse enim est Dóminus For he is our Lord and
Tobias noster et Deus, * ipse God, he is our father for
pater noster usque in ever.
ætérnum.

Reasons for Israel's punishment; promise of salvation:

5 Flagéllat nos propter He chastises us for our
iniquitátes nostras; et iniquities; and again he
íterum miserébitur et will have pity and will
congregábit vos ex óm- gather you from out of all
nibus géntibus, * inter the heathen, among whom
quas estis dispérsi. you are scattered.

6 Si convérsi éritis ad If you shall be converted
eum ex toto corde et tota to him with your whole
ánima vestra, * ut agátis heart and with all your
coram eo sincére, soul, so as to act sincerely
before him,

Tunc revertétur ad vos, Then will he return to you,
* neque abscondet fá- and he will not hide his face
ciem suam a vobis. from you.

7 Et consideráte, quæ fa- And consider, what he is
ctúrus sit vobis, * et ce- about to do for you, and
lebráte eum ore pleno. honor him with the fulness
of your voice.

Et benedicite Dómino And bless the just Lord
justo, * et laudes dicite and sing the praises of the
regis sæculórum.— king of ages.

Exhortation to conversion:

8 Ego in terra captivitá- I praise him in the land
tis meæ célebro eum, * of my captivity, and I show
et osténdo poténtiam ac his power and greatness to
magnitúdinem ejus gen- a sinful nation.
ti peccatríci.

Convertímini peccató- Be converted, ye sinners,
res, et fácite, quod ju- and do what is right before
stum est coram eo; * him; perhaps he will be
fórsitan benévolus erit kind to you and will show
vobis et fáciet misericór- you mercy.
diam vobis.

392 Laudes dicam Dei mei I will utter the praises of

et regis cæli, * et ánima my God and of the king of *Cant.*
mea exsultábit de ma- heaven, and my soul shall *Judith*
gnitúdi-ne ejus. rejoice because of his great-
ness.

Commentary

The aged Tobias here thanks God for the safe return of his son from his difficult journey, and also for the recovery of the use of his own eyesight.

He first praises the eternal God, who has the power to afflict or to show mercy to men who are subject to his sway.

3-7. Then he reminds the exiled Israelites that they must ever praise God. For, though he has caused the exile as a punishment, he is still the Father of Israel. He will finally restore the punished and penitent nation.

8-9. Tobias himself will always speak of the power and majesty of God. He will exhort the exiled people to repentance, while praising God.

Reflection

No matter how grievously we might have sinned we shall always receive pardon from God if we follow the exhortation of this canticle: "Be converted, ye sinners, and do what is right before him."

CANTICLE OF JUDITH

Judith 16, 13-17

Omnipotence Praised

For Increase in the Fear of God

A hymn of thanksgiving composed by Judith after her victory over the Assyrians when she cut off the head of Holofernes. The holy woman praises God, who made possible her mighty deed.

Judith will sing the glory of God:

Hymnum cantábo Dó- **I** will sing a hymn to the
mino, * hymnum **I** Lord, I will sing a new
novum cantábo Deo meo. hymn to my God.

Dómine, magnus es et Thou art great, O Lord,
gloriosus, * mirábilis and glorious, thou art won-
derful in power and not to
potentia et insuperábilis. be surpassed.

Cant.

Praise of God's power and grandeur:

Judith Tibi sérviat omnis crea- Let every creature serve
túra tua, * quia dixísti, thee, because thou hast
et facta sunt, spoken and they were
made,

Misísti spíritum tuum, Thou didst send forth thy
et creáta sunt, * nec spirit, and they were cre-
quisquam resístit voci ated, nor does any one re-
tuæ. sist thy voice.

15 Montes enim a funda- For the mountains are
méntis movéntur cum moved from their founda-
aquis; * petræ, sicut tions with the waters; the
cera, liquéscunt ante fá- rocks melt like wax before
ciem tuam.— thy face.

Qui autem timent te, * But they that fear thee,
tu es propítius eis, thou art propitious to
them,

16 Quia parvum est omne Because every sacrifice
sacrificium in odórem having a sweet odor is
suavitátis,* et mínimum small; and very small is
omne pingue in holo- every fat offering made for
cáustum tibi; a holocaust to thee;

Sed qui timet Dómi- But he who fears the Lord,
num, * erit úndique shall everywhere be great.
magnus.

17 Væ géntibus insurgén- Woe be to the nations that
tibus contra pópulum rise up against my people:
meum: * Dóminus exer- the Lord of hosts will take
cítium die júdicii vindí- revenge on them in the day
cábit in eos, of judgment,

Mittet ignem et vermes He will send fire and
in carnes eórum, * et worms into their flesh, and
plorábunt doléntes in they shall weep in sorrow
ætérnum. for ever.

Commentary

Judith, after freeing her city by killing Holofernes, sings this brief hymn of thanksgiving.

16-17. She praises the omnipotence of the Lord, who protects and exalts those who fear him and punishes forever those who rebel against him.

Reflection

Cant.
Eccl.

This canticle recalls the words of Our Lord: "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God" (Mark 10, 27).

CANTICLE OF ECCLESIASTICUS

Eccli. 36, 1-16

Prayer for the People

For the Welfare of the Church

A prayer of the son of Sirach, in which God is begged to glorify himself by overcoming the pride of the nations, and by helping his humiliated and oppressed people.

Prayer that God will deliver Israel from her enemies:

Miserére nostri, Deus **H**ave mercy on us, O God
univérsi, et réspice of the universe, and be-
nos, * et ínice timórem hold us, and send thy fear
tuum cunctis géntibus. upon all the nations.

Attólle manum tuam Lift up thy hand against
contra gentes aliénas, * the strange nations, that
ut videant poténtiam they may see thy power.
tuam.

Sicut coram eis san- As in their sight thou hast
ctum te ostendisti in shown thyself holy in us, so
nobis, * sic coram nobis in our sight show thyself
gloriosum te præbe in glorious in them,
eis,

Ut cognóscant, sicut et So they may know, even as
nos cognóvimus, * non we know, that there is no
esse deum præter te, god besides thee, O Lord.
Dómine.—

Rénova signa et instáu- Renew thy signs and re-
ra mirábília; * ⁊ illústra peat thy wonders; glorify
manum et bráccium thy hand and thy right
dextrum. arm.

Súscita iram, et effúnde Stir up anger and pour
furórem; * „ tolle adver- forth fury; take away the

Cant. sárium et déstrue inimí- adversary and destroy the
Eccl. cum. enemy.

¹⁰ Accélera tempus et stá- Hasten the time and fix
tue finem, * ut enárrent the end, that they may de
magna ópera tua. clare thy great works.

¹¹ Flamma iræ devorétur Let him who tries to
qui evádere conátur, * et escape be devoured by the
qui affligunt pópulum flame of anger, and let
tuum, in intéritum ru- them who afflict thy people
ant. rush headlong to destruc
tion.

¹² Cóntere cápita prín- Crush the heads of the
cipum inimicórum, * qui princes of the enemies that
dicunt: "Non est álius say: "There is no other be
præter nos." sides us."

May God return his dispersed children to Palestine:

¹³ Cóngrega omnes tribus Gather together all the
Jacob, * et hereditátem tribes of Jacob, and give to
da eis sicut diébus anti- them an inheritance as in
quís. the days of old.

¹⁴ Miserére pópuli tui, Have mercy, O Lord, on
Dómine, qui vocátur nó- thy people that is called by
mine tuo, * et Israël thy name, and on Israël
quem primogénitum ap- whom thou hast named the
pellásti. firstborn.

¹⁵ Miserére civitátis san- Have mercy on thy holy
ctæ tuæ Jerúsalem, * city, Jerusalem, the place of
loci habitatiónis tuæ. thy dwelling.

¹⁶ Reple Sion láudibus Fill Sion with thy praises.
tuis, * et glória tua tem- and thy temple with thy
plum tuum. glory.

Commentary

This hymn calls upon God to show his mercy to Israel by punishing the oppressors of his people. Thus he will prove that he is the one true God.

6-12. Let him by wondrous acts, as of old, reveal his terrible wrath to the enemy, that they may come to acknowledge him.

13-16. Let him restore his people to their land, and thus fill Jerusalem and his Sanctuary on Sion with his praises.

Reflection

Cant.
Isaías

We should keep our eyes fixed on heaven “for here we have no permanent city, but we seek for the city that is to come” (Heb. 13, 14).

CANTICLE OF ISAIAS

Is. 12, 1-6

Gratitude for Redemption

For Renewed Confidence in Our Saviour

Isaías foretells that the Israelites will praise God, their deliverer from the yoke of the Assyrians, as their fathers had glorified him after their release from Egypt.

God's anger was a source of conversion and consolation:

Et dic illo dices;

And in that day you shall say:

Gratias ago tibi, Dómine: nam irátus eras mihi, * sed convérta est ira tua, et consolátus es me.

I give thanks to thee, O Lord: for thou hadst been angry with me, but thy anger was turned away and thou hast comforted me.

Ecce Deus est salus mea; * confídám et non tímébo:

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and I will not fear:

Quia robur meum et fortitúdo mea Dóminus, * et factus est mihi salvátor.—

Because the Lord is my strength and my courage, and he has become my saviour.

Et hauriétis aquas cum gáudio * de fóntibus salutis;

And you shall draw waters with joy out of the fountains of salvation;

Summons to praise God:

Et dicétis die illo: * grátias ágite Dómino, et acclamáte nómini ejus; Nota fácite in pópulis grándia ópera ejus; * excélsum esse nomen ejus annuntiáte.

And you shall say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord and praise his name; Make known among the peoples his sublime works; proclaim that his name is high.

Cant. Psállite Dómino, quia Make ye melody to the
Ezech. gloriósa fecit; * innoté- Lord, for he has done glori-
scat hoc in univérsa ous things; may this be
terra. known throughout the
whole earth.

- 6 Exsultáte et laudáte, Rejoice and give praise, ye
qui habitátis in Sion, * that dwell in Sion, for great
quia magnus in médio in your midst is the Holy
vestri Sanctus Israël. One of Israel.

Commentary

Isaias considering the coming of the Messias (of which he has spoken in chapters 7 to 11) composes a hymn of thanksgiving for the gifts of the Messianic times.

He thanks the Lord for this great proof of his mercy and will to save men.

3-6. Drawing the waters of grace from the perennial fountains of Christ's salvation, the people will joyfully sing to the nations a hymn of praise for what the Lord has done in the midst of Israel.

Reflection

Our anger is sometimes justified. However, never forget the admonition of St. Paul: "Be angry and do not sin: do not let the sun go down upon your anger" (Eph. 55, 26).

CANTICLE OF EZECHIAS

Is. 38, 10-22

Restored to Health

For Resignation in Sickness

Prayer of Ezechias after Isaías had warned him of his approaching death. Painful sentiments caused by his illness; his joy and gratitude after he has obtained a prolongation of his life.

Effects of the poet's illness:

- 10 **E**go dixi: In dimídio **I** said: In the midst of my
diérum meórum va- days I shall go to the
dam ad portas inferi * gates of hell, robbed of the
frustrátus residuo annó- rest of my years.
rum meórum.

398 Dixi: Non jam vidébo I said: I shall no longer see

Dóminum in terra vi- the Lord in the land of the *Cant.*
véntium; * non jam con- living; I shall not see man *Ezech.*
spiciam hóminem inter any more among the dwell-
habitatóres terræ. ers of the earth.

Habitatio mea dissol- My dwelling shall be de-
vétur, * et auferétur a stroyed, and shall be taken
me ut tentórium pastó- away from me like the
rum. shepherds' tent.

Convólvo sicut textor Like a weaver I roll up my
vitam meam; a filo me life; he cuts me off from the
abscindit: * die noctú- thread: day and night thou
que crúcias me. dost torture me.

Vocíferor usque ad ma- I roar till morning, as a
ne, sicut leo confringit lion he crushes all my
omnia ossa mea: * die bones: day and night thou
noctúque crúcias me. dost torture me.

Ut hirúndo, sic pípio, * I chirp like a swallow, I
gemo ut columba. make a mournful noise like
a dove.

Deficiunt óculi mei su- Looking upward my eyes
spiciéntes in altum: * grow weak: O Lord, be near
Dómine, vim pátiar, adé- me, I suffer violence.
sto mihi.—

Joy and gratitude after his cure:

Quid loquar? Nam ipse What shall I say? For he
dixit mihi et ipse fecit! himself spoke to me and he
complébo omnes annos himself did it! Having
meos, * superáta amari- overcome the bitterness of
túdine ánimæ meæ. my soul I shall complete all
my years.

Quos tuétur Dóminus, They live whom the Lord
illi vivunt, et inter eos safeguards, and among
complébitur vita spíritus them the life of my spirit
mei: * sanum me fecísti shall be completed: thou
et servásti vivum! hast healed me and hast
kept me living!

Ecce, in salútem mutá- Behold, he has changed
vit mihi amaritúdinem my bitterness into salva-
meam: tu enim ser- tion: for thou hast pre-

Cant. vásti ánimam meam a served my life from the pit
Isaias fóvea intéritus; * nam of destruction; for thou
post te projecísti ómnia hast cast all my sins behind
peccáta mea. thee.

18 Profécto non inférnus Verily, hell does not honor
celebrat te, neque mors thee nor does death praise
te laudat; * non sperant, thee; they that go down in-
qui descéndunt in fóve- to the pit do not hope for
am, fidelitátem tuam. thy faithfulness.

19 Vivens, vivens celebrat The living, the living
te, ut ego hódie: * pater praises thee as I do today
fíliis notam facit fideli- the father makes known to
tátem tuam. his children thy faithful-
ness.

20 Dóminus servat me: The Lord keeps me: so we
ideo psalmos meos can- will sing my psalms all the
tábitus * ómnibus dié- days of our life in the house
bus vitæ nostræ in domo of the Lord.
Dómini.

Commentary

King Ezechias tells of the deep despair that gripped him when he was threatened with an early death (see Is. 38, 1-5). He repeats the prayer which he uttered on that sad occasion.

15-20. The Lord spared him, forgiving his sins. Now he can continue to praise the Lord with the living. He will spend all his days in this praise.

Reflection

In serious illness God may deign to prolong our lives by the sacrament of Extreme Unction. Its purpose is to help not only the soul, but also the body.

CANTICLE OF ISAIAS

Is. 45, 15-26

Salvation of the Gentiles

For Return of Nations to God

This canticle is part of the discourse in which Isaias utters his prophecy about Cyrus, the deliverer of God's people, and a type of Christ.

The eternal salvation of Israel:

Cant.

Vere tu es Deus abs-
cônditus, * Deus Is-
raël, Salvátor.

Verily thou art a hidden
God, the God of Israel,
the Saviour.

Isaias

Confûsi sunt et igno-
minia affécti * omnes
adversárii ejus.

All his adversaries have
been confounded and filled
with shame.

Abiérunt ignomínia ple-
ni * fabricatóres idoló-
rum.

Overcome with shame the
makers of idols went away.

Israël salvátus est a
Dómino salúte æténa;
* non confundémini ne-
que ignomíniam habébi-
tis per ómnia sácula.—

Israel was saved by the
Lord with an eternal salva-
tion; you shall not be con-
founded nor be ashamed
for ever and ever.

God, creator of the world:

Etenim sic dicit Dómi-
nus, creátor cæli, * ipse
Deus, qui formávit ter-
ram et fecit et stabilivit
eam.

For so says the Lord, the
creator of heaven, God him-
self, who formed the earth
and made it and establish-
ed it.

Non, ut vácuá sit, creá-
vit eam; ut habitétur,
formávit eam: * Ego
sum Dóminus, et non est
álius.

He did not create it to be
empty; he formed it to be
inhabited: "I am the
Lord, and there is no other.

Non in occúlto locútus
sum, * in loco terræ ob-
scúro;

I have not spoken in
secret, in a dark place of
the earth;

Non dixi sémini Jacob:
"Frustra quærétis me";
* ego Dóminus, promít-
tens justa, prænúntians
æqua.

I have not said to the seed
of Jacob: 'You shall seek
me in vain'; I am the Lord,
promising just things, fore-
telling right things.

Return to the true God!

Congregámini, et vení-
te, accédite cuncti, * qui
salvátí estis ex gentíbus.

Assemble yourselves, and
come, and draw near all of
ye, who have been saved
from the heathen.

Cant. Stulti sunt, qui portant lignum scúlp̃tile suum, * et súpplicant deo, qui salváre nequit.

They are foolish, that carry their carved wood, and pray to a god who cannot save.

- 21 Enuntiáte et proférte verba, consiliámini simul: * quis annuntiávit hoc ab antíquo, pridem prædíxit istud?

Tell ye, and pour forth the words, consult together Who has announced this from olden times, who has long since foretold it?

Nonne ego, Dóminus? et non est præter me deus; * deus justus et salvans non est extra me.

Is it not I, the Lord? And there is no god beside me: outside of me there is no just and saving god.

- 22 Convertímini ad me, ut sitis salvi, omnes fines terræ: * nam ego sum Deus, et non est álius.

Turn to me, that you may be saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is no other.

- 23 Per memetípsum juro, véritas exit de ore meo, * irrevocábile verbum:

I swear by my very self, truth goes forth from my mouth, a word that cannot be recalled:

Mihi curvábitor omne genu, * jurábit omnis lingua.

Every knee shall be bent to me, every tongue shall swear:

- 24 In Dómino tantum, de me dicent, justítia est et poténtia, * ad eum accédent confúsi omnes qui repugnárunt ei.

In the Lord only, they shall say of me, is justice and power, they shall come to him in confusion all that have resisted him.

- 25 In Dómino jus suum obtinébit et gloriábitur * omne semen Israél."

In the Lord all the seed of Israel shall obtain its right and shall be glorified."

Commentary

The prophet has foretold the restoration of Israel from exile. In this hymn he sings his thankful praise.

God, the Savior of Israel, is a hidden God (that is, his ways are hidden from men—especially from the Gentiles). His enemies are confounded and Israel is restored to honor forever.

402 18-19. The all-powerful Creator, the one true God, has not been obscure nor unjust in his promises to Israel.

**PRAYER
IN SORROW**—also Canticles page. 391, 397, 398

20-21. So let Israel now rally to him, leaving the falsehood of idolatry. Let her put her hope in the Lord's promises of salvation. *Cant. Jerem.*

22-25. All nations should turn to the Lord for salvation, acknowledging his supremacy and his justice. Especially should Israel find her glory in the Lord.

Reflection

In the Catholic Church there is a lay apostolate, in which every member should take an active part, striving to bring those outside the Church into its fold.

CANTICLE OF JEREMIAS

Jer. 31, 10-14

Joy of the Redeemed

An Appreciation of Our Faith

This is part of a prophecy in which Jeremias foretells the end of the Babylonian exile, and describes the joys that God has in store for his people upon their return to Palestine.

The nations are called to announce the good tidings:

Audite verbum Dómini, **H**ear the word of the
gentes, * et annun- Lord, O ye nations, and
tiáte in insulis quæ pro- declare it in the islands
cul sunt, that are afar off.

Et dicite: qui dispérsit And say: He that scattered
Israël, congregábit eum, Israel will gather him, and
* et custódiet eum sicut will keep him as the shep-
pastor gregem suum. herd does his flock.

The return from the exile:

Rédimet enim Dóminus For the Lord will redeem
Jacob, * et liberábit eum Jacob, and will deliver him
de manu præpoténtis.— from the hand of one
mightier than he.

Et vénient, et exsultá- And they shall come, and
bunt in monte Sion, * et shall give praise on Mount
cónfluent ad bona Dó- Sion, and they shall flow to-
mini, gether to the good things of
the Lord,

Ad fruméntum et vi- To the corn and wine and 403

Cant. num et óleum, * et ad oil, and to the young of the
Three pullos pécorum et ar- cattle and the herds.

Chil- mentórum.
dren Eritque ánima eórum Their soul shall be as a
quasi hortus irríguus, * watered garden, and they
et ultra non langué- shall become weak no more-
scent.

13 Tunc lætábitur virgo Then the virgin shall re-
in choro, * et júvenes et joice in the dance, the
senes simul. young men and old men to-
gether.

Et convértam luctum And I will turn their
eórum in gáudium, * et mourning into joy, and I
consolábor et lætificábo will console and make them
eos a mæróre eórum. glad from their sorrow.

14 Et reficiam ánimam And I will revive the soul
sacerdótum pinguédine, of their priests with fat-
* et pópulus meus satiá- ness, and my people shall
bitur bonis meis. be filled with my good
things.

Commentary

Jeremias has announced the restoration of Israel after the exile (31, 1-9).

Then in this poem he calls upon the nations to confess that the Lord, as a shepherd, is sure to gather his scattered flock of Israel and to redeem her from her conquerors.

12-14. The prophet vividly pictures the joy of the revived Israelite nation as it flocks to the Temple of the Lord on Mount Zion.

Reflection

Gospel means "good tidings." The books of the Gospels tell us the best news ever heard, that Jesus came on earth to save us.

CANTICLE OF THE THREE CHILDREN

Dan. 3, 52-88

Praise for Deliverance

For Acknowledging God's Greatness

A hymn of thanksgiving to God sung by Ananias, Azarias and Misael after they had been miraculously preserved from burning in the furnace into which Nabuchodonosor had thrown them.

Prelude of the canticle:

Cant.

*Three
Children*

Benedictus es, Dómine,
Deus patrum nostró-
rum; * et laudábilis et
superexaltátus in sǎ-
cula;

Et benedictum nomen
glóriæ tuæ sanctum, * et
laudábile, et superexal-
tátum in ómnia sǎcula.

Benedíctus es in tem-
plo glóriæ sanctæ tuæ, *
et superlaudábilis et su-
pergloriósus in sǎcula.

Benedíctus es super
thronum regni tui, * et
superlaudábilis et super-
exaltátus in sǎcula.

Benedíctus es, qui in-
tuéris profúnda, sedens
super Chérubim; * et
laudábilis et superexal-
tátus in sǎcula.

Benedíctus es in firma-
mento cæli, * et laudá-
bilis et gloriificátus in
sǎcula.

Benedícite, ómnia ópe-
ra Dómini, Dómino;
* laudáte et superexal-
táte eum in sǎcula.

Blessed art thou, O Lord,
the God of our fathers:
and worthy to be praised,
and exalted above all for
ever:

And blessed is the holy
name of thy glory, and
worthy to be praised, and
exalted above all unto all
ages.

Blessed art thou in the
temple of thy holy glory:
and exceedingly to be
praised, and exceeding
glorious for ever.

Blessed art thou on the
throne of thy kingdom,
and exceedingly to be
praised, and exalted above
all for ever.

Blessed art thou, that be-
holdest the depths, sitting
upon the cherubim: and
worthy to be praised and
exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art thou in the
firmament of heaven, and
worthy of praise and glori-
fied for ever.

All ye works of the Lord,
bless the Lord: praise
and exalt him above all for
ever.

Heavenly creatures are invited to praise the Lord:

Benedícite, Angeli Dó-
mini, Dómino; * bene-
dícite, cæli, Dómino.

O ye angels of the Lord,
bless the Lord; O ye heav-
ens, bless the Lord.

Cant. Benedícite, aquæ omnes quæ super cælos sunt, Dómino; * *Three Chit-dren* ⁶¹ benedícite, omnes exércitus Dómini, Dómino. O all ye waters that are above the heavens, bless the Lord; O all ye hosts of the Lord, bless the Lord

⁶² Benedícite, sol et luna, Dómino; * ⁶³ benedícite, stellæ cæli, Dómino.— O ye sun and moon, bless the Lord; O ye stars of heaven, bless the Lord;

⁶⁴ Benedícite, omnis imber et ros, Dómino; * ⁶⁵ benedícite, omnes venti, Dómino. O every shower and dew, bless ye the Lord; O all ye winds, bless the Lord;

⁶⁶ Benedícite, ignis et æstus, Dómino; * ⁶⁷ benedícite, frigus et albor, Dómino. O ye fire and heat, bless the Lord; O ye chill and cold, bless the Lord;

⁶⁸ Benedícite, rores et pluviae, Dómino; * ⁶⁹ benedícite, glacies et gelu, Dómino. O ye dews and rains, bless the Lord; O ye ice and frost, bless the Lord;

⁷⁰ Benedícite, pruina et nives, Dómino; * ⁷¹ benedícite, noctes et dies, Dómino. O ye hoar-frosts and snow, bless the Lord; O ye nights and days, bless the Lord;

⁷² Benedícite, lux et tenebræ, Dómino; * ⁷³ benedícite, fúlgura et nubes, Dómino.— O ye light and darkness, bless the Lord; O ye lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord;

Earthly creatures are invited to praise the Lord:

⁷⁴ Benedícat terra Dómino, * laudet et superexáltet eum in sæcula. O let the earth bless the Lord: let it praise and exalt him above all for ever.

⁷⁵ Benedícite, montes et colles, Dómino; * ⁷⁶ benedícite, univérſa germínantia in terra, Dómino. O ye mountains and hills, bless the Lord; O all ye things that spring up in the earth, bless the Lord;

- 77 Benedícite, fontes, Dómino; * ⁷⁸ benedícite, Lord; O ye fountains, bless the *Cant.*
mária et flúmina, Dó-bless the Lord; *Three*
mino. *Chil-*
dren
- 79 Benedícite, cete, et ómnia quæ movéntur in aquis, Dómino; * ⁸⁰ benedícite, omnes vólucres cæli, Dómino. O ye whales, and all that move in the waters, bless the Lord; O all ye fowls of the air, bless the Lord;
- 81 Benedícite, omnes béstiæ et pécora, Dómino; * laudáte et superexaltáte eum in sæcula.— O all ye beasts and cattle, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all for ever.
- 82 Benedícite, fílii hóminum, Dómino; * ⁸³ benedícite, Israël, Dómino. O ye sons of men, bless the Lord; O Israel, bless the Lord.
- 84 Benedícite, sacerdótes Dómini, Dómino; * ⁸⁵ benedícite, servi Dómini, Dómino. O ye priests of the Lord, bless the Lord; O ye servants of the Lord, bless the Lord.
- 86 Benedícite, spíritus et ánimæ justórum, Dómino; * ⁸⁷ benedícite, sancti et húmiles corde, Dómino. O ye spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord; O ye holy and humble of heart, bless the Lord.
- 88 Benedícite, Ananía, Azaría, Misaël, Dómino; * laudate et superexaltáte eum in sæcula. O Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, bless ye the Lord; praise and exalt him above all for ever.

Commentary

After being miraculously preserved from death in the fiery furnace, the three Hebrew youths, Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago, praise the Lord.

57-90. All creation is called upon to join in the praises—the creatures of the heavens (58-63); the elements (64-73); the earth and its irrational creatures (74-81); all mankind and especially Israel, her priests and holy men (82-87).

The three youths again themselves praise the Lord (88-90; verses 89-90 are added in the Breviary).

Cant.

Reflection

Habac.

We should try to emulate in some small way those whose principal office is to sing the praises of God. Such are the cloistered nuns who rise even in the dead of night to glorify his name.

CANTICLE OF HABACUC

Hab. 3, 2-19

Judgments Against the Wicked

For Salutary Dread of the Last Judgment

This canticle repeats prophecies uttered by Habacuc in the first two chapters of his book. He predicts God's judgments against the wicked, and foretells the blessings to be showered on God's people.

- 1 Precatio. Habacuc propheta. A prayer of Habacuc the prophet according to the tone of the Lamentations.

Theme of the canticle:

- 2 **D**ómine, audívi effátum tuum, * vidi, **I**O Lord, I have seen thy work, O Lord.

In decúrsu annórum In the passing of the years
manífesta illud, in decúrsu annórum fac make it manifest, in the
notum illud; * in ira mi passage of the years make
seratiónis meménto.— it known; in anger be mind
ful of mercy.

God will judge sinners, and save his people:

- 3 **D**eus de Theman venit, **G**od comes from Theman.
* et Sanctus de monte and the Holy One from
Pharan. Mount Pharan.

Operit cælum majestas His majesty covers the
ejus, * et laudis ejus heavens, and the earth is
plena est terra. full of his praise.

- 4 **S**plendor ejus est sicut His brightness is as the
lux, rádii pródeunt e light; rays by which his
manu ejus, * quibus vel power is covered, go forth
látur poténtia ejus. from his hand.

- 5 **A**nte faciém ejus gráditur pestis, * et febris séquitur vestigia ejus. Pestilence goes before his face, and fever follows his footsteps.

Cum stat, facit trémere
terram; * cum áspicit,
cómmove[n]t nátió[n]es.

Et conquassántur mon-
tes ætérni, curvántur
colles antiqui, * super
quos ab ætérno incédit.

Pressa vídeo tentória
Cusan, * tremunt taber-
nacula terræ Má[d]ian.—

Num in flúmina exár-
sit, Dómine, num in
flúmina ira tua, * num
in mare furor tuus,

Cum ascéndis super
equos tuos, * super cur-
rus tuos victóres?

Nudátum profers ar-
cum tuum, * reple[s] sa-
gittis pháretram tuam.

In flúmina scindis ter-
ram; * ¹⁰ cum vident te,
tremunt montes.

Imber aquárum irrúm-
pit, * océanus edit vo-
cem suam;

Lumen ortus sui obliví-
scitur ¹¹ sol; * luna ma-
net in habitáculo suo,

Ob lucem sagittárum
tuárum quæ volant, * ob
splendórem fulgurántis
hastæ tuæ.—

In ira incédis per ter-
ram, * in furóre cónteris
gentes.

When he stands, he makes
the earth tremble: when he
gazes, he moves the na-
tions.

And the eternal moun-
tains are shaken, ancient
hills, over which he walks
from all eternity, are bent.

I see the tents of Cusan in
affliction, the tabernacles
of the land of Madian trem-
ble.

Did thine anger blaze
against the rivers, O Lord,
against the rivers, and thy
fury against the sea,

When thou didst mount
upon thy horses, upon thy
victorious chariots?

Thou takest up thy strip-
ped bow, thou fillest thy
quiver with arrows.

Thou dost split the earth
into rivers; when they see
thee, the mountains trem-
ble.

The rain of waters rushes
in, the ocean sends forth its
roar;

The sun forgets the light
of its rising; the moon re-
mains in its dwelling,

Because of the light of thy
flying arrows, because of
the brightness of thy glit-
tering spear.

In anger thou dost tread
the earth, in fury thou dost
crush the nations.

Cant.
Habac.

Cant. Egréderis ad salvándum Thou goest forth to save
Heb. dum pópulum tuum, * thy people, to save thine
ad salvándum unctum anointed one.
tuum.

Detúrbas fastígium de Thou tearest down the
domo ímpii, * denúdas roof from the house of the
fundaméntum usque ad sinner, thou layest bare the
petram. foundation even unto the
rock.

14 Cónfodis hastis tuis Thou dost pierce with thy
caput bellatórum ejus, spears the head of his war-
qui irruunt ut me dispér- riors, who assail me that
gant, * exsúltant quasi they may dismember me,
qui páuperem dévorat they exult just as the one
occúlte. that devours the poor man
in secret.

15 Detrúdis in mare equos Thou dost thrust his
ejus, * in lutum aquá- horses down into the sea,
rum multárum.— into the slime of many
waters.

Confidence of the prophet in God:

16 Audívi, et trémuit caro I have heard, and my flesh
mea, * ad sonum fre- trembled, at the sound my
muérunt lábia mea. lips quivered.

Penetrávit tabes in ossa Rottenness entered into
mea, * et subtus titubat my bones, and my gait fal-
gressus meus. tered beneath me.

Quiétus expécto diem Undisturbed I await the
angóris, * qui oriétur pó- day of trouble, which will
pulo qui nos oppúgnat. dawn for the people that
oppresses us.

17 Etsi ficus non floret, * Although the fig-tree does
neque est fructus in ví- not blossom, and no fruit
neis; is on the vines;

Etsi fallit opus olívæ, * Although the labor of the
neque campi áfferunt olive fails, and the fields
cibum; yield no food;

410 Etsi deficiunt in caulis Although the sheep are

oves, * neque arménta wanting in the folds, and *Cant.*
in stábulis sunt: there are no cattle in the *Magni-*
stalls: *ficat*

Ego tamen exsultábo in Yet I will rejoice in the
Dómino, * lætábor in Lord, I will be gladdened in
Deo salvatóre meo. God my Saviour.

Dóminus dominátor est The Lord, the ruler, is my
robur meum, et fáciét strength, and he will make
pedes meos sicut cervá- my feet like unto the feet
rum, * et super excélsa of harts, and he will lead
dedúcet me. me upon high places.

Commentary

The prophet has previously threatened sinners with God's punishment. Here he describes God coming in judgment. Terrified at the vision of this terrible event, the prophet begs the Lord to temper his wrath with mercy.

3-7. He pictures God as coming down over the mountains, hiding the heavens by his luminous splendor. Pestilential fever and destructive earthquakes mark his approach, inspiring terror.

8-11. All nature is in upheaval at his victorious coming; the sun and the moon pale before the flashes of God's weapons of vengeance.

12-15. He crushes the enemies of his people, and completely annihilates their power.

16-19. The prophet is weak with fear at the revelation of this great judgment of the nations. But he becomes calm and even joyful, when he recalls that the judge is the Saviour and strength of Israel.

Reflection

When God sends us crosses, we must never waver in our faith. In confidence we must rely on his providential care.

CANTICLE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Luke 1, 46-55

Mary's Gratitude

For Increasing Devotion to Our Blessed Lady

A hymn of thanksgiving, in which the dominant note is the thought of the grace that God has so liberally poured upon Mary, upon the humble and lowly, and upon Israel, his chosen people.

Cant. Gratitude for the grace God has bestowed upon Mary:

Magnificat **M**agnificat * ánima **M**y soul magnifies the
mea Dóminum; Lord;

47 Et exsultávit spiritus And my spirit hath re-
meus * in Deo salvatóre joiced in God my Saviour
meo,

48 Quia respéxit humili- Because he has regarded
tátem ancillæ suæ: * the humility of his hand-
ecce enim ex hoc beátam maid: for behold from
me dicent omnes gene- henceforth all generation
ratiónes, shall call me blessed,

49 Quia fecit mihi magna Because he that is mighty
qui potens est, * et san- has done great things for
ctum nomen ejus, me, and holy is his name,

50 Et misericórdia ejus a And his mercy is from gen-
progénie in progénies * eration unto generation to
timéntibus eum.— those that fear him.

God always gave his gifts to the humble and lowly:

51 Fecit poténtiam brác- He has showed might with
chio suo; * dispérsit su- his arm; he has scattered
pérbos mente cordis sui. the proud in the conceit of
their heart.

52 Depósuit poténtes de He has put down the
sede, * et exaltávit hú- mighty from their seat, and
miles. has exalted the humble.

53 Esuriéntes implévit bo- He has filled the hungry
nis, * et dívites dimísit with good things, and the
inánés.— rich he has sent away
empty.

Jews will have special part in the graces of salvation:

54 Suscépit Israë!, servum He has protected Israel,
suum, * recordátus mi- his servant, being mindful
sericórdiæ suæ, of his mercy,

55 Sicut locútus est ad As he spoke to our fathers
patres nostros, * erga to Abraham and to his pos-
Abraham et semen ejus terity for ever.

Commentary
(The "Magnificat")

Cant.
Benedictus

Mary, after being greeted by Elizabeth as the mother of the Lord, responds with a joyful hymn.

She praises the Lord, her Saviour, for so favoring his humble handmaid that all future generations will pronounce her blessed. The Almighty has worked wonders in her. Thus his mercy is ever shown to all those who reverence him.

51-53. The Lord humbles the proud, the powerful, the rich; he gives blessings to the humble and needy.

54-55. He is now showing mercy to Israel according to his eternal promise to Abraham.

Reflection

The praise of Mary will never cease in the Catholic Church. How many feasts have been established in her honor! How numerous are her places of pilgrimage! How many the devotions to her!

CANTICLE OF ZACHARY

Luke 1, 68-79

Blessings of Salvation

To Use the Means to Save Our Souls

A prophecy in which Zachary foretells the blessings that the Messiah will bring to the Jews, and the role to be filled by John, his son, as the precursor of the Saviour.

Thanksgiving for the coming of the Messiah:

Benedictus Dóminus, **B**lesséd be the Lord, the Deus Israël, * quia God of Israel, because visitávit et redémit pópulum suum, he has visited and wrought redemption for his people,

Et eréxit cornu salútis nobis * in domo David of salvation for us in the servi sui, house of David his servant,

Sicut locútus est per os sanctórum, * quí olim mouth of his holy ones, the fuérunt, prophetárum prophets from of old; suórum:

Ut liberáret nos ab inimícis nostris, * et e ma- That he might rescue us from our enemies, and

- Cant.* nu ómnium qui odérunt from the hand of all that
Bene- nos, hate us,
dictus Ut fáceret misericórdi- That he might show
 am cum pátribus nostris mercy to our fathers, and
 * et recordarétur fœde- remember his holy cove-
 ris sui sancti: nant:
 73 Jurisjurándi, quod ju- The oath, which he swore
 rávit Abrahæ, patri no- to Abraham our father
 stro,* datúrum se nobis, that he would grant us,
 74 Ut sine timóre, e manu That, being delivered from
 inimicórum nostrórum the hand of our enemies-
 liberáti, * serviámus illi we should serve him with-
 out fear,
 75 In sanctitáte et justítia In holiness and justice be-
 coram ipso * ómnibus fore him all our days.
 diébus nostris.—

The mission of John:

- 76 Et tu, puer, prophéta And thou, child, shalt be
 Altíssimi vocáberis: * called the prophet of the
 præibis enim ante fáci- Most High: for thou shalt
 em Dómini ad parándas go before the face of the
 vias ejus, Lord to prepare his ways,
 77 Ad dandam pópulo ejus To give knowledge of
 sciéntiam salútis * in salvation to his people
 remissióne peccatórum through forgiveness of
 eórum their sins:
 78 Per víscera misericór- Because of the loving
 diæ Dei nostri, * qua kindness of our God,
 visitábit nos Oriens ex wherewith the Orient from
 alto, on high will visit us,
 79 Ut illúminet eos, qui in To enlighten those that sit
 ténebris et in umbra in darkness and in the
 mortis sedent, * ut díri- shadow of death, to direct
 gat pedes nostros in viam our feet into the way of
 pacis. peace.

Commentary

(The "Benedictus")

- 414 **Z**achary, the father of John the Baptist, regaining the
 use of his speech after the naming of John, announces
 the coming redemption and his son's part in it.

He first praises God because the salvation of the Messianic day has arrived in fulfillment of the prophecies of old. According to these prophecies Israel is to be freed from the oppression of her enemies. And, as God swore in his covenant with Abraham, the nation will be able to serve the Lord in holiness and justice forever.

*Cant.
Nunc
Dimit-
tis*

76-79. John is to be the prophet preparing the way for the Lord, teaching the people the way of salvation and remission of sin through the mercy of God. This mercy will come with the arrival of the Messiah (for the idea of the Messiah as the "Orient from on high" see Is. 9, 2; 42, 6; 49, 6; Mal. 4, 2; Zach. 6, 12). He will enlighten and direct men to salvation ("the way of peace.")

Reflection

While Zachary was guilty of a lack of faith in not immediately believing the angel's word that he would have a son, yet he is to be praised for his obedience in not hesitating to give his child the name of John.

CANTICLE OF SIMEON

Luke 2, 29-32

Salvation for All

For an Increase of the Light of Faith

A hymn of pious thanksgiving uttered by the old man Simeon as he held the infant Jesus in his arms. With an unshakable faith he always kept alive in his soul the expectation of the Messiah.

Simeon's hopes have been fulfilled:

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Dómine, * se- Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word in peace, cundum verbum tuum in pace,

Quia vidérunt óculi mei Because my eyes have * salutem tuam, seen thy salvation,

Christ will be a salvation to all:

Quam parásti * ante Which thou hast prepared faciem ómnium populó- before the face of all peoples, rum,

Lumen ad revelatió- A light to the revelation nem géntium * et gló- of the Gentiles, and the glory riam plebis tuæ Israël. of thy people Israel.

Cant.

Commentary

Nunc

(The “Nunc Dimittis”)

Dimittis

The aged Simeon, embracing the Infant Jesus and recognizing him as the long-awaited Saviour, joyfully announced his readiness to die. For his eyes have seen that in the Child God's long promised salvation is at hand. The Infant is to be the light to the Gentiles and the glory of Israel.

Reflection

Simeon combined a conscientious observance of the law with fear and a fervent love of God. May he always be our model!

GLOSSARY

of Names, Places and Terms

- Aaron** (âr'ûn), the eldest brother of Moses, and his spokesman. He was the first High Priest of the Jews. (Pss. 76, 21; 98, 6; 104, 26; 105, 16; 113, 10 12.)
- Abdenago** (âb-dên'â-gô), the Babylonian name given to Misaël. (*Canticle of the Three Children*, Commentary.)
- Abimelech** (â-bîm'ê-lêk), a king before whom David feigned himself mad. He is also called Achis. (Pss. 23, 1; 51, 2.)
- Abiron** (â-bî-rôn), a man who conspired against Moses and Aaron; the earth opened and swallowed him up. (Ps. 105, 17.)
- Abraham**, the founder of the Jewish nation, chosen by God to be the father of His people. (Pss. 46, 10; 104, 6, 9.)
- Absalom** (ab'sâ-lôm), the third son of David. He rebelled against his father, and was slain. (Pss. 3, 1; 142, 1.)
- Achior** (â'ki-or), a general in the army of the Assyrian Holofernes. (Ps. 43), Reflection.
- Adder**, a venomous serpent. One that does not answer the call of the snake charmer by hissing, is called "deaf." (Ps. 57, 5.)
- Agarene** (ag'â-rên), refers to the descendants of Agar, the hand-maid of Abraham, but by a different husband, whom she married after the Patriarch dismissed her. (Ps. 82, 7.)
- Ain** (â'in), the sixteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 21.)
- Aleph** (â'lêf), the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 1.)
- Alleluia**, a Hebrew word, meaning "Praise ye the Lord." It occurs twenty-four times in the Psalms, mostly in the titles.
- Alphabetic Psalm**, is a title given to Pss. 9, 24, 33, 36, 100, 111, 118, 145, in which each verse begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The arrangement is acrostic, intended to aid the memory.
- Amalec** (am'â-lêk), grandson of Esau. His descendants were a fierce tribe that dwelt south of Palestine. (Ps. 82, 8.)
- Ammon** (am'on), the son of Lot. His descendants dwelt east of the Dead Sea. (Ps. 82, 8.)
- Amorrhites** (am'ô-rits), one of the chief tribes that possessed Canaan before its conquest by the Israelites. (Pss. 134, 11; 135, 19.)

Key to Pronunciation:

â as in fate	ê as in me	û as in cañon	y as in yet
a as in fare	ë as in met	(kan'yun)	û as in huge
ä as in fat	ë as in ever	ô as in old	û as in up
â as in far	ê as in event	ô as in orb	û as in unite
ä as in fall	g as in go	ô as in not	û as in burr
â as in senate	î as in ice	ô as in obey	ôô as in noon
ch as in church	î as in pin	oi as in oil	ôô as in brook
			ou as in sound

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

- Glossary* **Ananias** (án-á-ní'ás), a nobleman of Juda, who was cast into the fiery furnace with Daniel for refusing to adore the pagan god, Bel. (*Canticle of the Three Children*.)
- Anna, Canticle of**, a song of praise and thanksgiving sung by the mother of Samuel. (Ps. 112, Commentary.)
- Anna**, the mother of Samuel. She was barren, but God heard her prayer, and gave her a son, whom she called Samuel, meaning "Heard of God."
- Antiphone**, a musical response made by one side of the choir to the other in singing. (Psalm 23, Commentary.)
- Arabia**, in ancient times was the extensive country lying east and south of Palestine, and occupying the peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. (Ps. 71, 10.)
- Aram Naharaim** (ár'am nā-hā-rā'im), means Aram of the T Rivers. It was a country between the Tigris and the Euphrate rivers. (Ps. 59, 2.)
- Aram Soba** (ár'am sōb'á), a country northeast of Damascus between the Orontes and the Euphrates rivers. (Ps. 59, 2.)
- Ark of the Covenant**, a chest containing the two tables of stone on which were written the ten commandments. It occupied the most sacred place in the sanctuary, the Holy of Holies. (Ps. 23, Reflection.)
- Asaph** (á'sáf), a celebrated musician in the time of David. (Ps. 49, 1; 72, 1; 82, 1.)
- Assyrians**, the people of the country lying along the Euphrates river as far north as Armenia. (Ps. 75, 1.)
- Atheist**, one who denies the existence of God. (Ps. 18, Reflection.)
- Atonement, Feast of**, "Yom Kippur," the feast held by the Jews on the tenth day of Tishri (September-October), when they celebrated their reconciliation with the Lord. (Ps. 99, Reflection.)
- Augustine, St.**, Doctor of Church, Bishop of Hippo in Northern Africa (A.D. 354-430). (Ps. 80, Reflection.)
- Azarias** (áz-á-rí'ás), one of the companions of Daniel, the prophet, cast with him into the fiery furnace. (*Canticle of the Three Children*.)
- Babel** (bā'bēl), the capital of the ancient kingdom of Babylonia, also called Babylon. There the descendants of Noe attempted to build the tower of Babel. (Ps. 86, 4.)
- Babylon**, the capital of the kingdom of Babylonia, on the Euphrates river. (Ps. 136, Title.)
- Babylonian Captivity**, refers to the location of the Jewish exiles during the seventy years of their captivity (606-536 B.C.). (Ps. 125, Title.)
- Basan** (bā'zān), or Bashan, a region to the east of the Jordan and the Lake of Genesareth. It was known for its rich pasture lands and its fine cattle. (Pss. 67, 23; 134, 11.)
- Basil the Great, St.**, (bā'z'il), (A.D. 329-379) Doctor of the Church, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia. He was the father of the monastic rule still existing in the East. (Ps. 91, Reflection.)

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

- Beatific Vision**, is the state of everlasting life in which we shall see God face to face in heaven, and enjoy eternal happiness. (Ps. 27, Reflection.)
- Beelphegor** (bê-êl'fê-gôr), a god worshipped by the Moabites. (Ps. 105, 28.)
- Benedictus**, the song of thanksgiving uttered by Zachary upon the birth of John the Baptist, his son.
- Benjamin**, the youngest son of Jacob by Rachel. His tribe occupied a small territory north of Juda. (Pss. 67, 28; 79, 3.)
- Bernard, St.**, Abbot and Doctor of the Church (1091-1153) Second Founder of the Cistercian Order, and of the Abbey of Clairvaux. Founder of the mysticism of the Middle Ages. Wrote many sermons, and because of his eloquence is known as "Doctor Mellifluus."
- Beth** (bêth), the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 9.)
- Bethsabee** (bêth-sâ'bê-ê), the wife of Urias whom David caused to be slain. The king then married her, and she bore him Solomon. (Ps. 50, 2.)
- Bonaventure, St.**, (A.D. 1221-1274) Doctor of the Church, Cardinal Archbishop of Albano in Italy, Minister General of the Friars Minor.
- Buckler**, a shield that protects the front of the body. (Ps. 34, 2.)
- Cades** (kâ'dêz), a city of Edom, to the south of Palestine. It was here that Moses striking the rock produced a miraculous flow of water. (Ps. 28, 8.)
- Canaan** (kâ'nân), or Chanaan, the son of Cham. It is the oldest name for the chief part of Palestine. (Pss. 43, Commentary; 104, 11; 105, 38; 134, 11.)
- Canticle**, a hymn or chant consisting of a psalm or occasional song.
- Caph** (kâf), the eleventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 81.)
- Cedar** (sê'dêr), the second son of Ismael. His tribe lived in Arabia, south of Palestine. (Ps. 119, 5.)
- Cham** (kâm), or Ham, was the youngest son of Noe. (Pss. 77, 51; 104, 23; 105, 22.)
- Cherubim**, one of the classes of angels. Figures of them were placed over the Holy of Holies in the Jewish Temple. (Pss. 17, 11; 79, 2; 98, 1.)
- Choir-master**, For the, found in fifty-five psalms, begins a direction as to how the psalm is to be sung.
- Chus** (kûs), the Benjaminite, a courtier of King Saul. He was very hostile to David. (Ps. 7, 1.)
- Cison** (si'sôn), a river in northern Palestine, which drains the plain of Esdrelon. (Ps. 82, 10.)
- Conies**, animals, rodents, and not unlike the woodchucks, which live in holes in rocks. (Ps. 103, 18.)

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

- Glos- sary** **Core** (kō'rê), a descendant of Levi, who rebelled against Moses and was swallowed by an opening in the earth. The name is found in the titles of eleven psalms.
- Cusan** (kū'sān), the land of Cush, peopled by the descendants of Cham, and usually identified as Ethiopia. (*Canticle of Habacuc*.)
- Cyrus** (sī'rūs), King of the Medes and Persians, who allowed the Jews to return from the Babylonian captivity.
- Daleth** (dā'lêth), the fourth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 25.)
- Daniel**, one of the four great prophets, who wrote an Old Testament book.
- Dathan** (dā'thān), a man who with Core and Abiron conspired against Moses, and was swallowed up by the earth. (Ps. 105, 17.)
- Daughter of Babylon**, means Babylon and its inhabitants. (Ps. 136, 8.)
- David**, eighty-five psalms are attributed to him. He was born in Bethlehem, and at the age of fifteen was anointed by Samuel as the second king of the Jews. He slew Goliath with his sling. Christ was descended from him, and is called the "Son of David."
- Davidic Line**, refers to the successors of David in the kingdom of Juda. (Ps. 131, Title.)
- Destroy not, to the Melody of**, the name of a song. Ps. 56 was to be to its melody.
- Deuteronomy** (dū-tēr-ōn'ō-mī), the last of the five books written by Moses. It means a "Second Law."
- Didactic Poem**, found in thirteen psalms, means teaching a moral lesson.
- Doeg** (dō'ēg), the Edomite, an Idumean, chief of Saul's herdsmen. (Ps. 51, 1.)
- Doxology**, a hymn of praise to God. (Ps. 88, Commentary.)
- Ecclesiasticus**, one of the books of the Old Testament. The word means "preacher." (Ps. 105, Reflection.)
- Edom** (ē'dūm), the name given to Esau, son of Isaac, and to the country occupied by his descendants. (Ps. 59, 2; 136, 7.)
- Edomite** (ē'dūm-it), an inhabitant of Edom or Idumea, to the south and southeast of Palestine. The Edomites were enemies of the Jews. (Ps. 51, 2.)
- Egypt**, a country in northeastern Africa. It is situated along both sides of the Nile river. (Pss. 67, Title; 77, 51; 104, 23; 105, 22.)
- Elohim** (ē-lō'hīm), a name for God, meaning a powerful being. (Ps. 13, Commentary.)
- Emath** (ēm'āth), the principal city of Upper Syria, in the valley of the Orontes. (Ps. 75, 11.)
- Endor**, a town southeast of Nazareth. It was the home of the sorceress whom Saul consulted. (Ps. 82, 11.)
- Ephesians** (ē-fē'zhāns), inhabitants of a city in Lesser Asia, to whom St. Paul wrote an epistle. (Ps. 67, Commentary.)

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

- Ephraim** 1. (ē'frā-īm) 2. (ē'frū-īm), the second son of Joseph, and the territory occupied by his tribe, north of Jerusalem. (Pss. 59, 9; 79, 3.)
- Ephrata** (ē'frātā), an ancient name for Bethlehem. (Ps. 131, 6.)
- Ethiopia**, a country in Africa, south of Egypt. (Ps. 67, 32.)
- Exodus** (ek'sū-dūs), the journey of the Israelites from Egypt under Moses. (Ps. 67, Commentary.)
- Ezechias** (ēz-ē kī'ās), a king of Judah. He asked God for a sign that he would recover from a serious illness which threatened his life, and the shadow on a sun dial went back ten degrees. (*Canticle of Ezechias*, Title and Commentary.)
- Ezechiel** (ē zō'kī-ēl), one of the four great prophets. The others are Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel. (Ps. 64, 1.)
- Fields of Iaar** (jā'ār), means "Forest-fields," and is a general designation for northern Palestine. (Ps. 131, 6.)
- Frances, St., of Rome**, (A.D. 1384-1440), one of the greatest mystics of the fifteenth century.
- Galaad** (gāl'ā ād), a mountainous country to the east of the river Jordan. (Ps. 59, 9.)
- Gath** (gāth), a city of the Philistines, and the native place of Goliath. (Ps. 55, Commentary.)
- Gebal** (gē'bāl), the mountainous district south of the Dead Sea. (Ps. 82, 8.)
- Genesareth** (gē-nēs'ā-rēth), a lake in the northern part of Palestine. (Ps. 93, Reflection.)
- Gentiles**, people who did not belong to the Jewish nation or faith. (Ps. 116, Title.)
- Ghimel** (gē'mēl), the third letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 17.)
- Gilead** (gil'ē ād), another form of Galaad. (Ps. 59, Commentary.)
- Gomorrha** (gō mōr'ā), a city north of the Dead Sea which like Sodom, a neighboring city, was destroyed by fire from heaven because of its wickedness. (*Canticle of Moses—Deuteronomy*.)
- Gradual Psalms**, are fifteen psalms (119-133), so called because they were sung by the exiles returning from the low lands near the Euphrates, or by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem, or by Levites on the fifteen steps in the Temple that led from the Court of the women to the Court of the men.
- Gregory, St.**, called the Great, (A.D. 540-604), Doctor of the Church, Pope, and one of the most notable figures in ecclesiastical history. (Ps. 58, Reflection.)
- Habacuc** (hā'hā kūk), a prophet of Judah who wrote a book of the Old Testament containing three chapters. (*Canticle of Habacuc*.)
- Hallel** (hā-lāl'), refers to pss. 112-117, sung on the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, New Moons, and Dedication. The word means "praise."

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

- Glos-* **Harp**, a stringed musical instrument. (Pss. 32, 2; 42, 4; 70, 22; 80, 3; 91, 4.)
- sary* **He** (hā), the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 33.)
- Heman the Ezrahite** (hē'mān) (ēz'rā-hit), the chief chanter of the sons of Core. (Ps. 87, 1.)
- Hermón** (hūr'mōn), a mountain on the northeastern border of Palestine. (Pss. 88, 13; 132, 3.)
- Heth** (hēth), the eighth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 57.)
- Holofernes** (hōl-ō-fūr'nēz), an Assyrian general who led an expedition against Palestine, and who was beheaded by Judith. (Ps. 43, Reflection.)
- Holy City**, a name for Jerusalem. (Ps. 121, Title.)
- Holy of Holies**, the most sacred part of the Jewish Temple. In it was placed the Ark of the Covenant, containing the ten commandments. (Ps. 99, Reflection.)
- Holy One**, God, so called because of his infinite sanctity. (*Canticle of Isaias*, 12, 1-6.)
- Horeb** (hō'rēb), the same as Sinai, where God gave the Law to Moses. (Ps. 105, 19.)
- Horns**, are symbols of strength or power. The figure is taken from the horns of animals, which are their chief means of attack and defense. They are mentioned frequently in the Bible. e.g., Ps. 74, 5.
- Hyssop** (his'ūp), a plant which furnished twigs to the Jews for sprinkling water in their rites of purification. (Ps. 50, 9.)
- Idithun** (id'i-thūn), a family to whom David entrusted the Temple music. (Pss. 38, 1; 61, 1; 76, 1.)
- Instruments, on Stringed**, refers to the musical accompaniment of the singing of the psalms. Various musical instruments existed among the Jews. The harp was a string and the pipe a wind instrument. (Ps. 53, 1.)
- Isaac**, the son of Abraham and Sara, whom Abraham was commanded to offer in sacrifice. (Ps. 104, 9.)
- Isaias**, the first of the four great prophets. He wrote a book of the Old Testament. (Ps. 63, Reflection.)
- Ismaelite** (is'mā-ēl-it), the son of Abraham by Agar, the Egyptian woman. He is the father of the Arabs. (Ps. 82, 7.)
- Israel**, another name for Jacob; and the name of the people descended from him, the Jews. (Pss. 21, 25; 113, 12.)
- Israelite**, another name for the Jews as descendants of Jacob or Israel.
- Jabin** (jā'bīn), king of Azor in the northern part of Palestine. (Ps. 82, 10.)
- Jacob**, the son of Isaac and Rebecca. His name was changed to Israel, meaning "who contends with God" after he had wrestled all night with an angel. (Ps. 23, 6.)

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

- Jahal** (jä'häl), wife of Haber. She killed Sisara, who was persecuting the Jews. (Ps. 82, Reflection.)
- Jeremias** (jër-ê mi'äs), one of the four great prophets. He wrote a book of the Old Testament. (Ps. 64, Commentary.)
- Jerome, St.**, (A.D. 340-420), Doctor of the Church, author of the Vulgate (Latin) edition of the Bible. (Ps. 8, Commentary.)
- Jew**, a member of the tribe of Juda. After the Babylonian Captivity all the Hebrews were called by this name.
- Joab** (jô'ab), David's nephew, and the general of his army. (Ps. 59, 2.)
- Jod** (jöd), the tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 73.)
- John the Baptist**, the precursor of our Lord, who exhorted the Jews to do penance, preaching to them on the banks of the river Jordan. (*Canticle* "Benedictus.")
- Jordan**, the principal river of Palestine. It empties into the Dead Sea. (Ps. 41, 7.)
- Joseph**, a son of Jacob. He was sold by his brothers to the Ismaelites, and taken into Egypt. (Pss. 76, 16; 79, 2; 80, 6.)
- Juda**, a son of Jacob; and the name of his tribe, from which is derived the word "Jew." (Ps. 47, 12.)
- Judith**, the valiant woman who saved the city of Bethulia from destruction by beheading Holofernes, general of the Assyrians. (Ps. 82, Reflection.)
- Kadesh** (kä'dêz), same as Cades.
- Kings**, I (Samuel) refers to the First Book of Kings, which contains the history of Samuel, and of the two kings, Saul and David. It is also called the First Book of Samuel, since he wrote it as far as the twenty fifth chapter. (*Canticle of Anna*.)
- Lamed** (lä'mêd), the twelfth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 89.)
- Lamentation**, an utterance of profound regret or grief. (Ps. 7, 1.)
- Law, New**, means the New Testament. (Ps. 116, Title.)
- Leviathan**, an aquatic animal, usually explained in Ps. 73, 14 as the crocodile.
- Libanus** (lib'ä nüs), or Lebanon, a chain of mountains on the northern border of Palestine. The cedars of Libanus were known for their huge size. (Pss. 28, 5, 6; 36, 35; 91, 13; 103, 16.)
- Lily of the Law, To the Melody of**, the name of a song. Ps. 59 was to be sung to its melody.
- Lilies, To the Melody of**, the name of a song. Ps. 44 was to be sung to its melody.
- Lion of the Tribe of Juda**, is a title given to our Lord, based on a prophecy in Genesis 49, 9. (Ps. 7, Reflection.)
- Liturgical**, pertaining to public worship. (Ps. 50, Commentary.)
- Madian** (mä'di än), son of Abraham, and ancestor of the Madianites, whose territory lay to the east of the Dead Sea. (Ps. 82, 10.)

Glos-
sary

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

*Glos-
sary*

Magnificat, the canticle recited by the Blessed Virgin on her visit to Elizabeth after Gabriel had announced that she was to be the mother of Christ. (Ps. 112; Commentary.)

Mahalat (mā'hā-lāt), **To the Melody of**, a song meaning "Sickness," to whose melody. Ps. 52 was to be sung.

Manasses (mā-nās'ez), the oldest son of Joseph, after whom one of the tribes was named. (Pss. 59, 9; 79, 3.)

Manna (mān'ā), the food that God miraculously supplied to the Israelites in the desert on their return from the exile in Egypt (Ps. 77, 24.)

Maskil (mās'kēl), found in the title of thirteen psalms, is variously explained as a didactic psalm, a meditation or a skillful psalm.

Massa (mās'ā), a place in the desert where the Jews during their return from Egypt showed want of faith in the protecting presence of God. (Ps. 94, 9.)

Melchisedech (mēl-kīz'ē-dēk), king and priest of Salem (Jerusalem). (Ps. 109, Commentary.)

Mem (mēm), the thirteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 97.)

Meriba (mēr'i-bā), **The Waters of**, an allusion to an incident in the desert when the Jews were returning from their exile in Egypt and murmured against God because of the lack of water. God gave them the water. The expression means "Waters of Strife." (Pss. 80, 8; 105, 32.)

Messianic Times, refer to the period when Jesus Christ lived on earth. (*Canticle of Isaiah* 12, 1-6, Commentary.)

Messias (mē-sī'ās), a Hebrew word meaning "anointed;" one of our Lord's titles. (Ps. 21, Title.)

Miktam (mīk'tām), occurs in the title of six psalms. It is a musical term, the meaning of which cannot be determined.

Misach (mīs'āk), the Babylonian name given to Azarias. (*Canticle of the Three Children*, Commentary.)

Misael 1. (mīs'ā-ēl) 2. (mī'sā-ēl), with Daniel he refused to obey the order of Nabuchodonosor to adore the idol, Bel, and he was cast into the fiery furnace. (*Canticle of the Three Children*.)

Misar (mī'sār), a district now known as Seora, close to the place where the river Jordan rises. (Ps. 41, 7.)

Moab (mō'āb), son of Lot, and the ancestor of the Moabites, who lived east of the Dead Sea. (Pss. 59, 10; 82, 7.)

Moses, the brother of Aaron, and the lawgiver of the Jews. He led his people out of Egypt. (Ps. 89, 1.)

Mosoch (mō'sök), a section between the Black and the Caspian seas. (Ps. 119, 5.)

Mount Pharan, a mountainous and desert region where the Jews camped during their return from Egypt. (*Canticle of Habacuc*.)

Mount Sion, one of the hills on which Jerusalem was built. (Ps. 23, Title.)

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

Mut Labben (müt' läb'bën), **To the Melody of the Song**, a song meaning "Death for the son," to whose melody Ps. 9 was to be sung. *Glos-sary*

Nabuchodonosor (näb-û-kô-dôn'o-sor), king of Babylon, who destroyed Jerusalem, and led its people into captivity. (*Canticle of the Three Children*, Title.)

Nathan (nā'thān), the prophet who reproved David for his sins of adultery and murder. (Ps. 50, 2.)

Nazareth, the city in Galilee where our Lord was raised. (Ps. 106, Reflection.)

Nephtali (nēf'tā-li), the son of Jacob after whom one of the twelve tribes was named. (Ps. 67, 28.)

Nun (nōn), the fourteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 105.)

Nunc Dimittis, the prayer said by Simeon on the occasion of the presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

Octave Lower, An, a direction found in the title of a number of the psalms, meaning eight tones lower than the former pitch used in singing.

Og (ög), king of Basan, east of the Jordan and the Lake of Genesareth. (Pss. 134, 11; 135, 20.)

Ordinances, judicial decisions or acts. Found especially in ps. 118.

Oreb (ô'rēb), a Madianite prince, slain by Gedeon. (Ps. 82, 12.)

Orient from on High, a name for the Messias. The orient refers to the rising of the sun, which dispels darkness. In like manner our Lord, the sun from heaven, dispelled spiritual darkness. (*Canticle* "Benedictus.")

Palestine, a name given to the Holy Land, derived from the "Philistines," who dwelt along the Mediterranean Sea. (Ps. 67, 12.)

Paralipomenon (pär-ä-lī-pōm'ē-nōn), also known as the First Book of Chronicles, is a supplement to the Books of Kings. The plural of Paralipomenon means "Things Omitted." (*Canticle of David*.)

Passover, an annual feast instituted to commemorate the sparing of the Jews when the firstborn of the Egyptians were killed in that country. (Ps. 112, Commentary.)

Patriarchs, the fathers and rulers of families, tribes or races. It is used extensively in biblical history. (Ps. 98, Title.)

Pentecost, a harvest festival of the Jews. Ps. 112, Commentary; a Christian feast commemorating the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.

Pharao (fä'rä-ô), a generic name for the kings of Egypt. (Pss. 134, 9; 135, 15.)

Phe (phē), the seventeenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 129.)

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

- Glos-
sary** **Philistæa** (Philistia), (fi-lis'ti-a), the country of the Philistines. (Pss. 59, 10; 86, 4.)
- Philistines** 1. (fi-lis'tinz) 2. (fil'is-tinz), a people who dwelt along the Mediterranean Sea to the west and southwest of Palestine. (Ps. 55, Title.)
- Phinees** (fin'ë-ës), a grandson of Aaron, and the third high priest of the Jews. (Ps. 105, 30.)
- Pillar of the Cloud**, a low-lying, luminous cloud, by means of which the Lord led the Hebrews for the forty years they wandered in the desert on their return from the exile in Egypt. (Ps. 98, 7.)
- Potsherd**, a piece of a broken earthen pot. (Ps. 21, 16.)
- Precepts**, law as it tells our duties and obligations. Found in various texts of Ps. 118.
- Presumption, Sin of**, rash expectation of salvation without making proper use of the necessary means to obtain it. (Ps. 37, Reflection.)
- Promised Land**, the whole of western Palestine, promised to the Israelites by God, and which they inhabited after their sojourn in the desert. (Ps. 113, Reflection.)
- Psaltory**, a musical instrument that had the shape of a harp. Mentioned in various psalms.
- Quail**, birds given by God to the Jews as food in the desert on their return from Egypt.
- Rahab** (rā'hāb), a harlot of Jericho, who received the spies sent by Josue. In Ps. 86, 4, it refers to Egypt; it is also found in Ps. 88, 11.
- Raphael, Archangel**, guided the younger Tobias on his journey to Media. He is one of the seven angels who stand before the Lord. (*Canticle of Tobias*, Title.)
- Red Sea**, a narrow arm of the ocean separating Asia from Africa, Egypt from Arabia, 1,450 miles in length. (Pss. 65, Commentary; 105, 7, 9, 22; 135, 13, 15.)
- Res** (rës), the twentieth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118; 153.)
- Saba** (sā'bā), the land of Arabia Felix, from which the queen came to explore the wisdom of Solomon. (Ps. 71, 10.)
- Sabbath, Saturday**, observed as the day of rest by the Jews. Today it means Sunday. Mentioned in various psalms.
- Sade** (sā-dā'), the eighteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 137.)
- Salem** (sāl'ēm), another name for Jerusalem. (Ps. 75, 3.)
- Salmana** (sāl'mā-nā), a Madianite king slain by Gedeon. (Ps. 82, 12.)
- Salmon** (sāl'mön), a mountain near Sichem in Samaria. (Ps. 67, 15.)
- 10* Samech** (sām'ëk), the fifteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 113.)

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

Glos-
sary

- Samuel**, a Hebrew prophet, who delivered the Israelites from the Philistines. He anointed the kings, Saul and David. (Ps. 98, 6.)
- Sarion** (sā'ri'ōn), Mount, the Phœnician name for Mt. Hermon. (Ps. 28, 6.)
- Saul**, the first king of Israel. He is mentioned in the titles of five psalms.
- Seed of Israel**, means the Jews, the descendants of Jacob, also called Israel. (*Canticle of Isaiah*, 45, 15-26.)
- Sehon** (sē'hōn), king of the Amorrites, whose territory lay east of the Jordan. (Pss. 134, 11; 135, 19.)
- Sennacherib** (se nāk'ēr-ib), a king of Assyria who invaded Palestine. (Ps. 75, Commentary.)
- Sheol** (shē'ōl), in the Old Testament was the place where the souls of the dead abode, and where they were treated according to their merit. The word is found in various psalms.
- Shiloh** (shī'lō), another form of Silo. (Ps. 77, Commentary.)
- Sichem** (sī'kēm), a town in Samaria, about thirty-five miles north of Jerusalem. (Pss. 59, 8; 107, 8.)
- Sidrach** (sīd'rak), the Babylonian name given to Ananias. (*Canticle of the Three Children*, Commentary.)
- Silent Dove, To the Melody of**, the name of a song. Ps. 55 was to be sung to its melody.
- Silo** (sī'lō), a city fifteen miles north of Jerusalem. (Ps. 77, 60.)
- Simion** (sīm'ōn), the holy old man who was inspired by God to recognize the Infant Saviour when his parents carried him to the Temple to present him to the Lord. (Ps. 79, Reflection.)
- Sin** (sēn), the twenty first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 161.)
- Sinai** 1. (sī'nī) 2. (sī'nā'ī), a mountain in south Arabia. On its summit God gave the ten commandments to Moses. (Ps. 67, 9.)
- Sion** (sī'un), see Mount Sion.
- Sirach** (sī'rak), refers to the author of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, Jesus son of Sirach of Jerusalem. (*Canticle of Ecclesiasticus*.)
- Sisara** (sī'sā'ra), a general in command of the army of Jabin; he was slain by a woman, Jael. (Ps. 82, 10.)
- Sodom** (sōd'um), a city north of the Dead Sea which was destroyed by fire from heaven because of its wickedness.
- Solomon**, the son of David, and the wisest of the kings of Israel. He built the Temple. (Pss. 71, 1; 126, 1.)
- Statute**, an authoritatively declared rule or decree. (Ps. 17, 23.)
- Succoth** (suk'ōth), a place east of the Jordan and south of the Jabbok river. Jacob stopped here on his return to Palestine. (Ps. 107, 8.)
- Syrians**, the inhabitants of the country which lies to the north of Palestine. (Ps. 59, Title.)

Tabernacles, Feast of, one of the three great feasts of the Jews, commemorating their fathers' dwelling in tents or tabernacles in the wilderness, and also held in thanksgiving for crops. (Ps. 80, Title.)

GLOSSARY—Names, Places and Terms Explained

- Glos- sary** **Tabor**, a mountain five miles east of Nazareth. The Transfiguration took place here. (Ps. 88, 13.)
- Tau**, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 169.)
- Teth** (têth), the ninth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 65.)
- Tharsis** (thâr'sis), or Tartessus, a city near Cadiz in Spain. (Psa. 47, 8; 71, 10.)
- Theman** (thêm'ân), the southern part of Edom, which lay to the south of Palestine. (*Canticle of Habacuc.*)
- Timbrel**, a small hand drum or tambourine. (Pss. 80, 3; 149, 3; 150, 4.)
- Tobias**, chief character in the Book of that name. A Jewish captive in Assyria, he was remarkable for his mercy to his companions, and for his resignation in trials. He had a son by the same name.
- Tunic**, an undergarment, with or without sleeves, reaching to the knees, and girded at the waist. (Ps. 21, 19.)
- Tyre** (tir), a maritime city of Phœnicia. (Pss. 44, 13; 82, 8; 86, 4.)
- Valley of Salt**, a place at the south end of the Dead Sea. (Ps. 59, 2.)
- Vau** (vô), the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 41.)
- Viaticum**, the reception of Holy Communion when in danger of death. (Ps. 15, Reflection.)
- Virgins, According to The**, the name of a song. Ps. 45 was to be sung to its melody.
- Vulgate**, the Latin translation of the Bible, made by St. Jerome, so called because of its widespread use.
- Wine-skin**, the skin of an animal used as a bottle for wine. (Ps. 118, 83.)
- Wine-presses, To the Melody of the Song**, Ps. 80 was to be sung to the melody of this song.
- Yahweh** (yă'wê), name of God. It was revealed to Moses by God when on Mt. Horeb he said: "I am who am." (Ps. 13, Commentary.)
- Zabulon** (zăb'û-lôn), a son of Jacob, and the name of his tribe, which lay to the west of the Lake of Genesareth. (Ps. 67, 28.)
- Zachary** (zâk'â-ri), the father of John the Baptist. He was a priest. (*Canticle* "Benedictus," Title and Commentary.)
- Zain** (zâ'in), the seventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (Ps. 118, 49.)
- Zeb** (zêb), a prince of Madian slain by Gedeon. (Ps. 82, 12.)
- Zebee** (zê'bê-ê), also a prince of Madian, defeated and put to death by Gedeon. (Ps. 82, 12.)
- Ziph** (zîf), a town in the tribe of Juda south of Hebron. (Ps. 53, 2.)
- 12* Zoan** (zô'ân), or Tanis, was an important city in Lower Egypt. (Ps. 77, 12.)

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